

Together, Success ...

at home • at school • at work



Alabama Department of
REHABILITATION SERVICES

Annual Report 2003

BLUEPRINT FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

MISSION: TO ENABLE ALABAMA'S CHILDREN AND ADULTS WITH DISABILITIES TO ACHIEVE THEIR MAXIMUM POTENTIAL

We VALUE the worth, dignity and rights of people with disabilities and we will:

- provide an easily accessible, integrated continuum of services;
- ensure quality services that are family-centered, culturally sensitive and community-based;
- promote and respect consumer choice regarding provision of services;
- advocate for the rights of persons with disabilities and promote self-advocacy;
- include people with disabilities, their families and advocates in agency planning and policy development.

We VALUE independence and meaningful work for people with disabilities and we will:

- educate families, children, employers, schools and the public that people with disabilities can and do work;
- advocate for quality health services and community supports that enable people with disabilities to work and/or function independently;
- develop, maintain and expand working relationships with employers;
- identify and create job opportunities that are compatible with consumer abilities;
- foster cross-divisional collaboration to achieve successful work outcomes.

We VALUE all staff and their contributions in achieving our mission and we will:

- communicate openly and honestly;
- recruit, develop, retain and promote a diverse, qualified staff;
- involve staff in agency planning, policy development and performance objectives;
- recognize and reward exemplary job performance;
- provide staff opportunities for personal and professional growth.

We VALUE leadership at all levels and we will:

- maximize staff participation in all agency initiatives;
- create an environment which encourages and supports creativity and innovation;
- facilitate teamwork among all staff;
- provide support and leadership development opportunities.

We VALUE maximum acquisition and efficient and effective management of resources and we will:

- acquire maximum resources;
- increase legislative support;
- develop and use appropriate technological advancements;
- evaluate the effective and efficient use of our resources;
- collaborate with organizations in the public and private sectors.

We VALUE public support and we will:

- educate the public about our mission, goals, services and expertise;
- secure support from business and industry, consumers of services, partners and policymakers;
- create partnerships that expand services to enhance opportunities for consumers;
- maximize staff involvement in the development of grassroots support.

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Alabama Department of REHABILITATION SERVICES

P.O. Box 11586, 2129 E. South Blvd., Montgomery, AL 36111-0586
334-281-8780, 1-800-441-7607, 1-800-499-1816 (TTY)
www.rehab.state.al.us

commissioner's message

Dear Friends,

What a remarkable, rewarding year this has been! On one hand, it has been a time of unparalleled, often painful, financial challenge at every level of government. On the other, the staff members of this department, as well as our community partners across Alabama, have much to celebrate. Responding together with creative collaboration, innovative solutions, and just plain hard work, we have once again risen to new levels of success on behalf of the unique children, teenagers and adults we serve.



Steve Shivers
Commissioner

The ADRS *continuum of services* for Alabamians with disabilities, provided through a single department, is more accessible than ever to the children, adults and families who need assistance. At the same time, the number of consumers whose lives we touch has reached an all-time high.

I am also extremely proud that our Early Intervention and Children's Rehabilitation programs have won accolades from their federal partners for excellence and achievement. In addition, our Vocational Rehabilitation programs, including the Transition program for high school students, continue to be models of success and cost-effectiveness for the rest of the nation. Our SAIL/Homebound program has secured federal funding to launch a new initiative designed to open the doors to employment for Alabamians who have severe disabilities.

The accomplishments of the past year are detailed in this report. Amid the facts and figures, however, are the human stories that breathe life into the numbers. They are true stories of our consumers, their families, and their unique journeys toward success – at home, at school and at work.

Their successes are an ongoing tribute to the unshakable dedication of our staff, who have proven yet again that they are not deterred by challenges. Rather, challenges inspire them to higher achievement.

Please join me in looking back with pride on one year and with confidence ahead to the next as together we pursue our mission: *to enable Alabama's children and adults with disabilities to achieve their maximum potential.*

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Steve Shivers".

chairwoman's letter

My dear Friends,

As I look back at the many accomplishments of last year, I am so proud to be a part of this extraordinary department and so grateful for being allowed to serve as a member of the Alabama Board of Rehabilitation Services. Despite the state's financial trouble and its impact on our department, our staff remained unyielding in their dedication to our mission. You will see the results of their determination and hard work in the program highlights featured in this report.

More importantly, you will share those accomplishments in a real way through the personal stories of the children, adults and families they served.



Patricia
'Crickett' Floyd
District 3

It has been a privilege to serve as chairperson of the ADRS Board. I want to express my sincere appreciation to my fellow board members for their wise counsel, enthusiastic support and unselfish commitment to this department throughout the year. We have a unique perspective. Not only are we permitted to share responsibility for the department's future course, we also are allowed to share the joy of success with our consumers. For me, there is nothing more gratifying than hearing from a family about the newest milestone in their infant's

life, seeing the smile on a child who has exceeded expectations in school, or feeling the pride of someone who has been enabled to join the workforce. Those are the successes the department thrives on.

On behalf of the board, I want to extend to our staff and to our many community partners our hearty congratulations for a job well done. I truly believe that together we accomplish wonderful things.

Patricia "Crickett" Floyd

alabama board of rehabilitation services



John Shackelford
District 1



Young Stevenson Jr.
District 2



David Brock
District 4



James Brown, Jr.
District 5



Roger McCullough
District 6



Mitch Strickland
District 7

Together, Success ...

at home • at school • at work



The Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services (ADRS) provides a *continuum of services* from birth throughout life for Alabamians with disabilities through a wide array of state and federal programs which are consolidated in a single agency.

This cost-effective, consumer-friendly approach allows a seamless transition for individuals who require services across a multitude of programs. The *continuum of services* also enables ADRS to meet the changing needs of infants, toddlers, children, teenagers, and adults who require individualized assistance at home, at school and at work.

The ADRS *continuum of services* is provided through these major programs:

Alabama's Early Intervention System coordinates services statewide for infants and toddlers with disabilities and developmental delays from birth to age 3, preparing them and their families for the transition to the state Department of Education's preschool program for 3- to 5-year-olds. Early Intervention also provides financial and technical support to the more than 60 community programs that provide direct services to families.

Children's Rehabilitation Service provides individualized services to children with special health-care needs from birth to age 21 and their families. In addition, Children's Rehabilitation Service provides disability services, expertise and adaptive technology to and for local school systems, assisting teachers, school nurses and other staff in the education of children with disabilities.

Children's Rehabilitation Service is also responsible for administering the statewide Hemophilia Program, which serves Alabama's children and adults who have this life-threatening blood disorder.

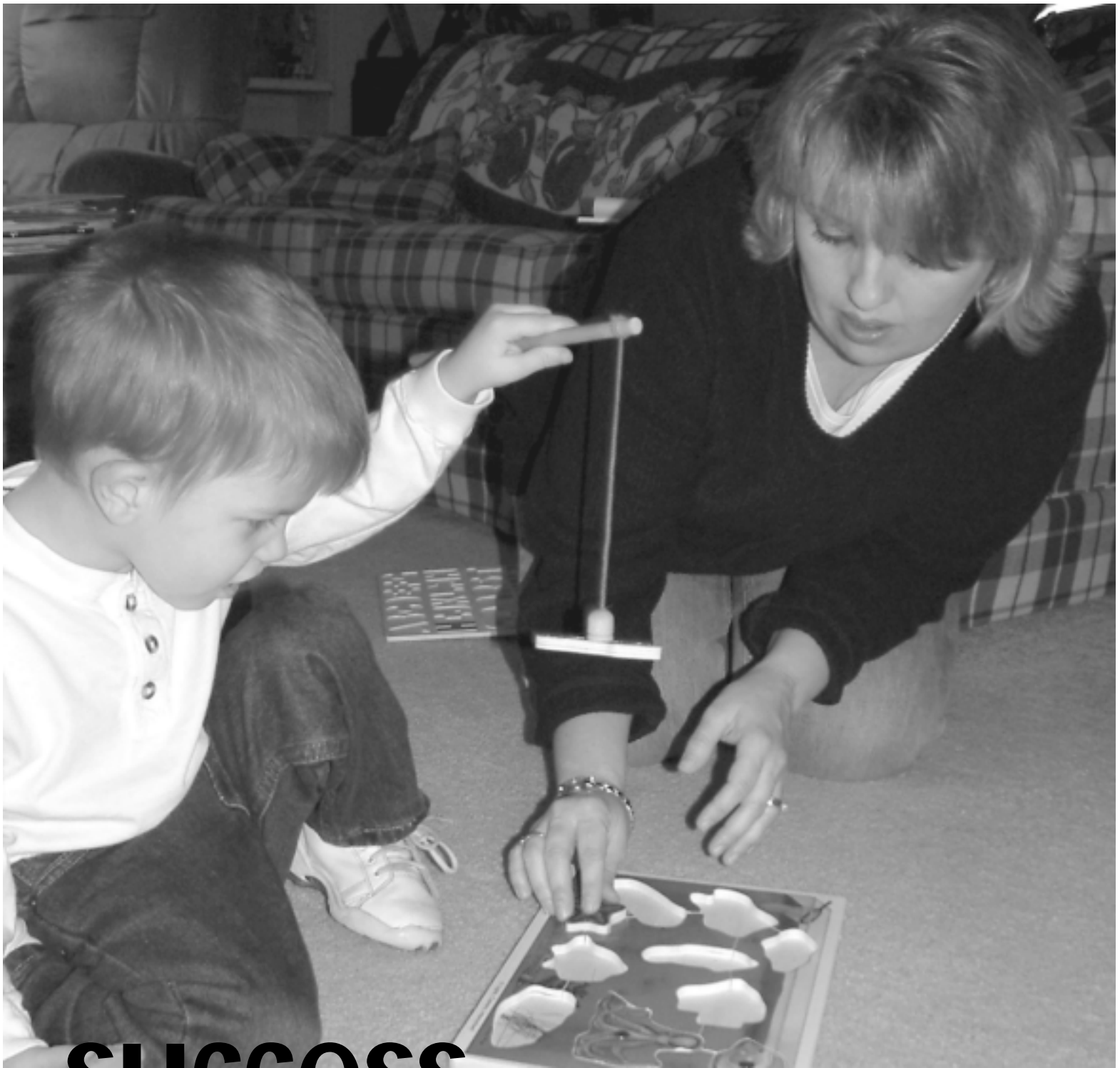
Vocational Rehabilitation Service is the department's largest division and provides rehabilitation, education and employment-related services to more than 44,000 adolescents and adults with disabilities each year. These services involve long-standing partnerships with local school systems, colleges and universities, junior colleges, vocational technical schools and community rehabilitation programs.

The ADRS Employer Development program provides nearly 7,500 disability management and employee placement services to Alabama businesses each year.

ADRS also administers the Business Enterprise Program for Alabama's citizens who are blind and visually impaired. The program promotes independence through the operation of more than 100 vending operations, snack bars and cafeterias in locations statewide.

SAIL (State of Alabama Independent Living)/Homebound provides services to Alabamians who have catastrophic congenital disabilities or disabilities resulting from spinal cord or head injuries. SAIL/Homebound staff provide education and support services to families with children and adults with these severe disabilities to make them more independent in the home and, whenever appropriate, to maximize their educational experience.

Though services are tailored for each person, all ADRS programs work in harmony toward a common goal: that every Alabamian with a disability have the appropriate services, support, education and training to become independent, productive citizens.



success at home

The road to success often begins at home. The philosophy of providing early intervention services in a child's natural environments makes the home the perfect starting point for success in the future. Infants and toddlers with developmental delays and disabilities can receive therapies and other services in this familiar setting while their parents can learn specialized techniques to help their children improve. When EI children move from Early Intervention to the next step – the school system – they are better prepared for the new challenges that await them.

matthew stevenson, selma



“Early Intervention is very much about supporting the family and helping us through. I don’t know what I’d do without them.”

Matt Stevenson enjoys a moment of play at his home in Selma.

Gail Stevenson is no stranger to Alabama’s Early Intervention System. Earlier in her nursing career, she worked for an EI program in Selma. Yet, when it came to her son Matthew, she found that all she knew didn’t help.

“When Matt started Early Intervention, it was like all the things I knew I didn’t know,” she said. “And even when I remembered, I still needed that support. I still needed somebody to guide me.”

Gail and her husband, Bryan, adopted Matthew and his older brother when the boys were 4 and 14 months old, respectively.

The children were sickly, particularly Matthew, who had a series of nagging ear infections. When the youngster quit babbling at 9 months, his doctor suspected a hearing problem. By the time tubes were placed in his ears, he had a speech delay. Still, Gail never considered the need for early intervention.

Finally, in February 2003, at age 2, Matthew was tested for early intervention and “tested right in.”

Suddenly, all she remembered from her days with EI returned. She noticed Matthew wouldn’t make eye contact, made lots of repetitive sounds – both “red flags” for autism.

When Matthew’s case coordinator came to the Stevenson home for a site visit, Gail’s fears were confirmed.

“She said, ‘I’ve noticed some autistic-type behavior.’ My stomach sunk down to my feet – it still does today,” Gail said. “Then, I said, ‘We need to fix it.’ That’s the medical side of me. ‘Let’s find out what we need to do; let’s fix this problem.’ I’m finding out it isn’t that easy.”

She took Matthew to a pediatric neurologist, who diagnosed the little boy with mild autism.

Currently, Matthew is receiving speech and occupational therapy through Early Intervention. In addition, the Early Intervention-provided occupational therapist is working with another occupational therapist to help Matthew with sensory integration, which the family hopes will help the boy handle stress more effectively.

As for Gail, she finds that the roles in her life have reversed.

“When I was working in Early Intervention, families would say, ‘You don’t know how much you mean to us.’ And now, the people who are working with us in the same way really don’t know how much they mean to me. It’s been my saving grace. You never think you’re going to be here.”

matthew stevenson’s continuum of services

Early Intervention

Early Intervention has been involved with Matthew since he was 2 years old, coordinating services including speech and occupational therapy.

Children’s Rehabilitation

Children with autism who have specified accompanying medical conditions may receive Children’s Rehabilitation services through age 21.

Vocational Rehabilitation

As Matthew enters high school, VRS will be available to work with him to help in developing his plans for further education and employment.

gillian hamrick, enterprise



"Without Early Intervention, we would've been lost ... without Early Intervention, she might be crawling instead of walking."

Gillian Hamrick sings 'Itsy Bitsy Spider' with her father, Doug.

Kerry and Doug Hamrick were typical first-time parents, grappling with diaper changes and sleep and feeding schedules.

When their daughter was 2 months old, however, life changed. Their doctor noticed some developmental delays and referred them to Alabama's Early Intervention System. The diagnosis? Gillian had a mild hearing loss in the right ear, a moderate loss in the left.

Her parents were crushed.

"It was a shock at first," said Kerry Hamrick. "You want to do everything right. And then you wonder, did I do something to cause the hearing loss?"

As time passed, it became apparent that Gillian had other problems as well. She was sent to a cardiologist, an eye specialist, an orthopedic specialist, a geneticist. After a series of tests, the doctors were able to rule out heart and eye problems, but the geneticist delivered more upsetting news to the new parents – Gillian appeared to be missing the long arm of a chromosome. The doctors aren't certain how the defect will manifest itself, and the uncertainty is difficult for her parents.

"We're concerned about how this might affect her in the future," said her mom.

Meanwhile, Gillian has been receiving speech, occupational, and physical therapy, as well as special instruction through an Early Intervention program in Dothan.

Gradually, the little girl has made progress.

"They've all taught Gillian how to do something," said Kerry Hamrick. "She can go up and down the stairs. She's learning to jump. She can catch. She can run. She's riding a tricycle. All of this from a child who wasn't even walking seven months ago. It's all coming together, with everybody's help."

And, though the little girl's future may be uncertain, her parents feel good about her present.

"Through Early Intervention, we got the help she needed," said Kerry.

gillian hamrick's continuum of services

Early Intervention Children's Rehabilitation Vocational Rehabilitation

Since shortly after Gillian's birth, she has received speech, occupational and physical therapy and special instruction through the Early Intervention system.

CRS is available to provide the Hamrick family with a variety of services, including care coordination, therapies, counseling, and classroom assistance, as necessary until Gillian reaches age 21.

VRS will be available to work with Gillian as she enters adolescence, helping her prepare for independence as an adult by developing plans for further education and employment.



success at school

When it comes to the classroom, children with disabilities are no different from other children. They need family support, the right tools and a welcoming environment to succeed. Through its main programs, ADRS addresses the disability challenges of each child, teenager or adult, provides the appropriate adaptive technology, and joins hands with the education system at every level to maximize the individual's educational experience. From preschool through high school, to college and beyond, ADRS strives to ensure that our consumers have the necessary support to achieve their maximum education potential.

stacy brock, fort payne



Stacy Brock attends sociology class at Northeast Alabama Community College in Rainsville.

"Children's Rehab has helped from the beginning, getting Stacy her first wheelchair. Now, Vocational Rehab is helping her get an education."

Stacy Brock wants to be an actress. A freshman at Northeast Alabama Community College in Rainsville, she plans to audition for a play on campus next year. Landing a role may be a high expectation for some, but not for Stacy, her friends or her mother.

"From the time she was little, I told her she could do anything she wanted to do," said Stacy's mom, Denise, "and she believed me."

Stacy was born with cerebral palsy, which significantly limits her movement and makes speaking, and understanding her, difficult. Children's Rehabilitation Service has been a part of her life since she was a year old, treating her at clinics, helping with her leg braces and wheelchairs.

"CRS has helped us from the beginning," said Denise, "and they're still with us today."

CRS was also there when Stacy started school. Because of her disability, the family had trouble getting Fort Payne school officials to realize that Stacy needed to be in regular classes, not the "resource room," where Stacy said she felt isolated. When Stacy was tested for special education classes, she surprised everyone but her parents when her scores placed her in the school's program for gifted students.

With good grades in high school and an impressive ACT score, Vocational Rehabilitation Transition Counselor Randy Berry believed Stacy would be a good candidate for college. She wanted to go off to a four-year school, but compromised with her parents by first attending nearby Northeast Alabama.

"This is a great school," said Stacy, "but like all kids my age, I just want to get out of the house. I'm a normal 19-year-old."

Getting out of the house presents a challenge. SAIL/Homebound assigns Stacy a personal attendant to help with her activities of daily living, and VRS makes sure she has a note-taker in class. Her counselor understands she will need that support to live on her own.

"If she goes from here to a four-year college," said Berry, "we know we're going to have to provide some things for her to live on her own. But we'll be there with her as long as we need to be."

Support from ADRS throughout Stacy's life has been a great resource for the Brock family.

"Having everyone – CRS, VRS and SAIL – work together for Stacy has helped us a lot," said Denise. "I'm not going to be able to take care of her forever. But she's working toward her education and ADRS is doing everything it can to help her get an education and a vocation."

As for the aspiring actress, she's looking forward to next semester and her next audition. She doesn't think Hollywood is that far from Fort Payne.

stacy brock's continuum of services

Early Intervention Children's Rehabilitation Vocational Rehabilitation

Stacy was eligible for Early Intervention services as soon as she was diagnosed with cerebral palsy at age 1. In FY 2003, more than 4,000 Alabama infants and toddlers with disabilities and delays received EI services.

Stacy has been receiving services from CRS since she was 1 year old. In addition to providing services related to her disability, CRS staff members also collaborated with her schools to enable her to receive the best education possible.

A rehabilitation counselor has assisted Stacy with her transition to college and is working with her school to assure she receives appropriate accommodations.

curry 'bubba' taylor, mobile



Curry 'Bubba' Taylor studies before the beginning of class.

"I've had CRS staff come to me asking, 'What do you need? Are you OK? Can we do anything?' It's like a family. CRS is my second family."

Curry "Bubba" Taylor is only 14 years old, yet he's had enough surgeries for a lifetime: back surgery, hip surgery, knee surgery, shunt replacements. Still, those who know him say he'll never require surgery on his smile.

"Curry's always smiling," said his mother, Ruthie. "He never meets a stranger."

The teenager has spina bifida, a congenital disorder resulting from the failure of the spine to close properly during development, and uses a wheelchair for mobility.

His mother vividly remembers the first few days after his birth, when a Children's Rehabilitation Service social worker visited her in the hospital to tell her about the services available to Curry.

"I didn't believe her at first when she told me what to expect," said Ruthie Taylor. "He looked like other babies."

But as the months passed, she realized her son wasn't like other children.

"I wondered, 'Why am I being punished? What have I done that this is happening to my child? Why my son?'"

She contacted CRS, where she learned about the challenges Curry would face. She connected with other families who had children with special needs.

Then, when Curry turned 1 year old, something happened.

"I stopped blaming. I started saying, 'He's special.' And he is. God made him like this for a reason. I didn't know what the reason is, and I still don't, but he could be worse off."

By all accounts, Curry *is* special. He is an honor roll student, computer whiz, loves basketball and has great self-esteem.

Throughout his life, CRS has been there, providing wheelchairs, assistance with surgery, and – equally important perhaps – moral support to his mother.

"CRS has been a lifeline for me," said Curry's mom. "I have never had to worry about a wheelchair, a walker, his surgeries – never had to worry about anything."

CRS workers also meet with personnel at his school, offering assistance on everything from physical therapy to accommodations.

Nowadays the woman who didn't want to accept her son's disability never misses an opportunity to offer advice to the parents of children with disabilities: "It may look bad right now, but as the road gets longer, it's going to smooth out and it's going to get easier. There are people to help you. Call CRS."

curry taylor's continuum of services

Early Intervention Children's Rehabilitation Vocational Rehabilitation

Curry was eligible for Early Intervention services as soon as he was diagnosed with spina bifida at birth. In FY 2003, more than 4,000 Alabama infants and toddlers with disabilities and delays received EI services.

Curry has been receiving services from Children's Rehabilitation since he was only a few months old. In addition to providing medical equipment and assisting with surgeries, CRS has collaborated with school system personnel to assure Curry succeeds in school.

When Curry enters high school, VRS will work with him and his family to develop a plan for his future. Whether he decides to enter the workforce or continue his education, VRS will provide the assistance he needs, from technology to special accommodations.

sherry johnson, lee county



Sherry Johnson and VRS Rehabilitation Counselor Mimi Glisson look over one of Sherry's scrapbooks.

"Vocational Rehab has made a difference. I didn't have to fight half the battles with college that I did when I was younger. They fought for me."

Ask Sherry Johnson about her time as a law student and – like scores of other law students – she will tell you it was difficult.

"It was absolutely horrible," she said. "You know how they say you try to block out terrible experiences? I don't remember the whole first year of law school."

Yet the Lee County woman – who has an inherited retinal degenerative disease and is legally blind – persevered and received her law degree from Faulkner University's Jones School of Law this past summer.

The accomplishment is no surprise to Mimi Glisson, a Vocational Rehabilitation Service counselor who has been working with Sherry since September 2000.

"She's an amazing young woman," Glisson said of Johnson. "I can't imagine doing what she's done, especially considering the obstacles she's faced. But her determination, along with a few simple accommodations at school, made all the difference."

VRS provided a computer specially equipped with speech synthesizer software that reads documents aloud and a Braille printer. Sherry also had an aide to assist with research. Two ADRS staff members – Joe Helm and Curtis Glisson – who live in the Auburn area but work in Montgomery volunteered to provide transportation to class.

And though it was difficult, she never considered quitting.

"I don't quit anything," she said. "I don't start something and not finish it."

VRS has been working with Sherry since she was a senior in high school, providing assistive technology and assuring she had the accommodations necessary for success in the postsecondary classroom.

"VRS has made a difference," she said. "I didn't have to fight half the battles with college and law school that I did when I was younger. We fought for everything then. College and law school were a different story."

What's next for Sherry? She really isn't thinking much beyond the bar exam, which she'll take in 2004. Once that is behind her, she is interested in working in property or real estate law.

At some point, however, she is hoping to return to her other passion: barrel racing. She's been competing since she was 10 and has won the Alabama state championship for ladies barrels as well as the 4-H state championship.

sherry johnson's continuum of services

Early Intervention Children's Rehabilitation Vocational Rehabilitation

Early Intervention services are available to eligible children from birth to age 3. Sherry became an Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services consumer when she was a teenager.

CRS offers assistance to children, teenagers and young adults who have special health care needs, including those with visual impairments.

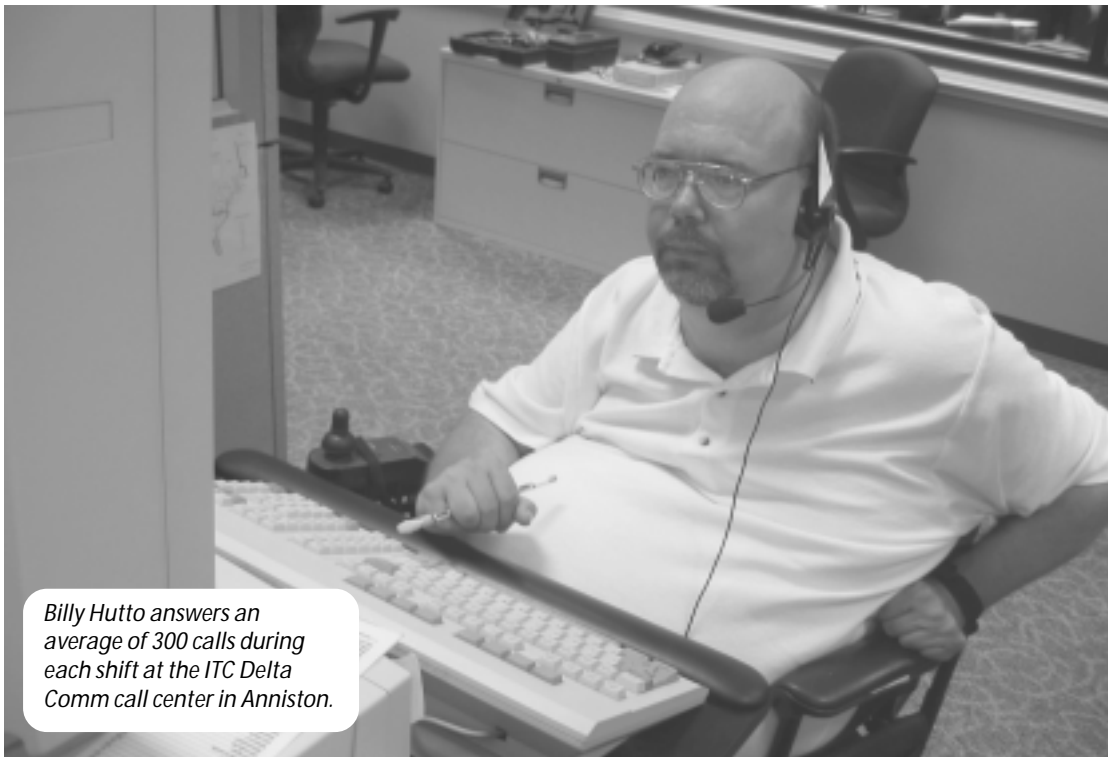
VRS began working with Sherry to develop an employment plan when she was a senior in high school. While she was in college and then in law school, VRS was there, assuring she received the assistance she needed for academic success.



success at work

Even as a child is born with a disability, ADRS staff are looking ahead at that child's future as an adult and his or her rightful dream of dignity, worth and independence. With the continuum of services as a foundation, ADRS is dedicated to providing every individual and family the support, guidance and assistance they need for the journey. For Alabamians with disabilities, the road to success is a partnership involving ADRS, the education system, employers of every size, and consumers who believe that work and independence are synonymous.

billy hutto, anniston



Billy Hutto answers an average of 300 calls during each shift at the ITC Delta Comm call center in Anniston.

"Before ADRS entered the picture, I had no idea what I was going to do."

Most bosses don't want their employees on the phone, but where Billy Hutto works, they encourage it. In fact, they insist. Billy is one of more than 200 directory assistants at the ITC Delta Com call center in Anniston. He's only part-time, but during his shift Billy will answer some 350 calls. As quickly as he finishes one call, he takes another, hour after hour. It sounds stressful, but to Billy it's a "stress reliever."

Billy should know about stress. In 1981, while swimming with friends at a creek in Talladega National Forest, 21-year-old Billy sustained a spinal cord injury. The injury left him paralyzed, except for limited movement in his arms.

After the accident, he wasn't sure what to do.

"I tried to go back to dairy farming," said Billy, "but it didn't work. And, back then people were scared to hire people with disabilities."

At the urging of his Vocational Rehabilitation Service counselor, Billy returned to school, earning an associate's degree in computer programming and a bachelor's degree in industrial technology. But health problems sent him to the operating room for several surgeries. After his recovery, he taught adult education computer classes and worked at the Talladega Raceway, sending pit notes to the press box via computer.

Still, motivation was ongoing problem until the day his mother got his attention.

"She told me to quit feeling sorry for myself," Billy said. That was the coaching he needed.

Through the teamwork of his counselor, SAIL/Homebound Case Manager Teresa Boullemet and a willing employer in ITC, Billy is back on the fast track. After a SAIL/Homebound personal care attendant helps him get up in the morning, Billy is on his own, driving himself to work like any other ITC employee.

His only accommodation so far has been a raised work station, said ITC Supervisor Susan Smith.

Billy's hoping his part-time job will be expanded into full time, although his off hours are anything but dull.

As chief of the White Plains Volunteer Fire Department, he supervises two fire stations and 20 volunteers. Every night, his fire house buddies take turns as personal care attendants when it's time for Billy to call it a day.

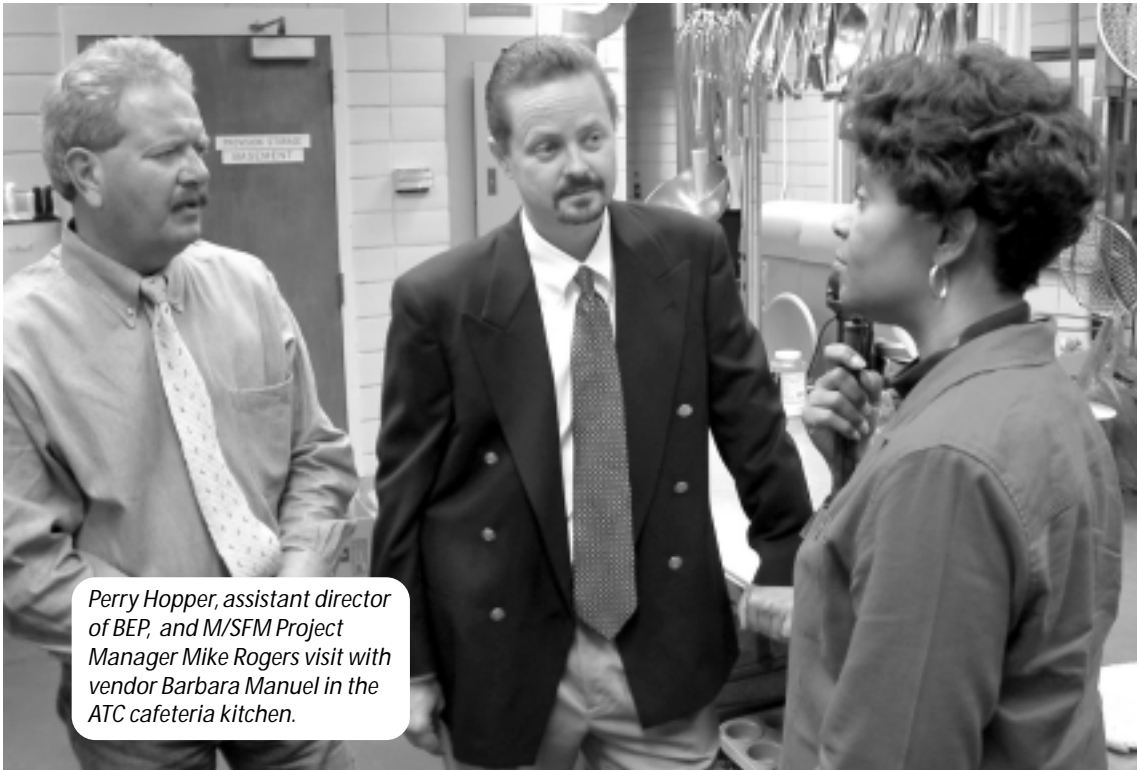
Now Billy is too busy to get depressed. And he shares his mother's brand of wisdom with others facing similar challenges.

"If I could, I'd give 'em a good swift kick and tell them to get off their butts," said Billy. "You can't give up. You just have to have the will to get out and do things."

billy hutto's continuum of services

Early Intervention	Children's Rehabilitation	Vocational Rehabilitation
Early Intervention services are available to eligible children from birth to age 3. Billy contacted the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services after he was injured at 21.	CRS serves children with special needs from birth to age 21. Billy was injured as an adult.	Following his injury, VRS assisted Billy in assessing his career potential, furthering his education, and locating employment.

barbara manuel, mobile



Perry Hopper, assistant director of BEP, and M/SFM Project Manager Mike Rogers visit with vendor Barbara Manuel in the ATC cafeteria kitchen.

“The Business Enterprise Program as a whole has been a big part of my life ... I’m very happy and fortunate to be a part of BEP.”

Barbra Manuel’s new venture is also her biggest challenge since joining the BEP ranks of blind managers in 1987. “Job choices are narrow if you’re blind, but BEP offers you an option,” said Barbara.

BEP assists Alabamians who are blind or have significant visual impairments in becoming independent business people as managers of vending locations, other food service-related operations, even gift shops. For Barbara, who had been interested in the business world even before retinitis pigmentosa began claiming her sight, connecting with BEP was a case of perfect timing.

Her first assignment as a BEP vendor was managing a small snack bar at the Mobile City Garage, where she put in 12- to 15-hour days, working the counter and tending vending machines. Barbara was so successful, she landed a bigger, more lucrative, operation – the cafeteria across town at the University of South Alabama.

There, Barbara was the sole proprietor, responsible for everything from purchasing to personnel. After six successful years, she heard about a new and exciting opportunity.

BEP staff had been talking with the U.S. Coast Guard about placing vending machines at its offices in Mobile. But after initial meetings, BEP aimed higher. They convinced the Coast Guard to allow a BEP vendor to take over management of the cafeteria at the Aviation Training Center, the hub of emergency training for all four branches of the military as well as emergency search and rescue squads. The ATC cafeteria operates around the clock, serving meals seven days a week, 365 days a year.

BEP officials brought Barbara together with Birmingham-based Southern Foodservice Management, a national company which manages cafeterias in the public and private sectors. Soon the M/SFM (Manuel/Southern Foodservice Management) Company was born, with Barbara the major shareholder as well as manager of BEP’s first location at a Coast Guard facility east of the Mississippi.

Barbara is quick to promote the benefits of BEP, both as a member of the program’s Blind Elected Committee and as a veteran member of the National Federation of the Blind, and to educate other blind persons about BEP.

“BEP is my first recommendation because the program helps in so many ways, providing anything you need to be more successful.”

As for her disability, Barbara doesn’t let it get in the way of her success.

“Sometimes it gets frustrating,” she said, “but with sight or without, I know I can make it.”

barbara manuel’s continuum of services

Early Intervention	Children’s Rehabilitation	Vocational Rehabilitation
Early Intervention services are available to eligible children from birth to age 3. Barbara contacted the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services for assistance as an adult.	CRS serves children with special needs – including those with visual impairments – from birth to age 21.	Through VRS’ Business Enterprise Program, Barbara has received the training and support vital to success in her career as an independent business woman.

danny smith, albertsville



Danny Smith shows
Rehabilitation Counselor
Andy Street one of the many
trophies he sells.

*"Life goes on even
if you have a
disability; you still
have to find a way
to jump over that
wall ... ADRS is there
to show you how to
get over that wall."*

As a rehabilitation counselor, Andy Street sometimes works with people with "big, grand ideas," but no follow through. In Danny Smith, though, Street knew he had an exception. When the Boaz man – who has retinitis pigmentosa and is legally blind – began discussing the possibility of buying a local trophy shop, Street knew it wasn't just talk.

"I don't have that many people who are able to start a business and actually follow through with it," said Street. "They might have big, grand ideas, but they're not willing to do the leg work that it takes to get it started. Danny has done that. He works hard. There's no doubt about it."

So far the hard work has paid off. Since starting Trophy Master out of his home in April 2002, Danny Smith has provided trophies to several large companies in north Alabama, including Tyson Foods, Goldkist, Progress Rail, and Fabco Equipment Sales. His company also has provided trophies for teams from Albertville High School, Arab High School, and Dixie Youth Baseball.

He's also managed to land a contract to supply decorator mugs to 25 Wal-Marts in the area.

But he hasn't done it alone. His father and wife help out with the business, as well as one part-time employee.

Vocational Rehabilitation Service also has played a part in the business's success, assisting with equipment such as a heat press, mug press and software.

In addition, Street has served as a sounding board from time to time.

"He knows I'm here to help – even if he just needs somebody to run something by," he said.

Though he's pleased with the success of the business, Danny is always looking at more "big, grand ideas." He'd like to expand into producing T-shirts, sweatshirts, caps, informational signs and Christmas ornaments, among other items.

"I'm trying to dream big," he said. "Who knows how far we can go?"

danny smith's continuum of services

Early Intervention Children's Rehabilitation Vocational Rehabilitation

Early Intervention services are available to eligible children from birth to age 3. Danny contacted the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services for assistance as an adult.

CRS serves children with special needs – including those with visual impairments – from birth to age 21.

As Danny's eyesight has worsened, VRS has provided counseling, assessment of career potential and support to help him to pursue his dream of becoming an independent businessman.

becky guinn, valley



Becky Guinn answers a student's question during an art class at Valley High School.

"When you're in this kind of situation, it's just like a puzzle that's all mixed up. ADRS helped us sort through the pieces and make sense of things."

Art is in Becky Guinn's head and heart. As a teacher at Valley High School, she's been able to share that passion with her students. Yet in January 2003, when her hands and feet were removed following complications related to heart surgery, it seemed unlikely she would ever teach art again.

Today, though, as a result of support from family, friends, coworkers and the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services, Becky is back in the classroom.

ADRS' involvement began even before Becky left the hospital.

"We were still dealing with life and death, so we couldn't call, but they (ADRS staff members) came to see us in the hospital," said David Guinn, Becky's husband. "It was great because they took the initiative to contact us and stay with us until we were at a point where we could deal with some of this."

Then, when Becky left the hospital, Rehabilitation Counselor Linda Ensminger met with Becky and her family to discuss her future, an easy task since she had already decided she wanted to return to teaching.

"Becky knew almost from the beginning what she wanted," said Ensminger. "I wasn't sure if I knew how to do all that she needed and wanted. But in came Jeff (Mega, rehabilitation technology specialist), and he knew."

Mega assessed Becky's needs and made recommendations on technology – from a computer and voice-activated software to a voice recorder attached to her wheelchair – to assist her on the job.

Transportation to and from work, meanwhile, was a challenge.

"It was such an ordeal to go anywhere," Becky said.

To address that, Vocational Rehabilitation Service assisted with van modifications, adding a ramp that allows Becky to maneuver her wheelchair in and out of the vehicle.

By August 2003, less than seven months after returning home from the hospital, Becky Guinn was able to return to the classroom, where she belongs.

becky guinn's continuum of services

Early Intervention Children's Rehabilitation Vocational Rehabilitation

Early Intervention services are available to eligible children from birth to age 3. Becky and her family contacted the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services after her surgeries.

CRS serves children with disabilities from birth to age 21. Becky became a consumer as an adult.

Following her surgeries, VRS helped Becky to reassess her career potential. After she returned to the classroom, VRS assisted with van modifications and made recommendations on appropriate assistive technology.

jeff harris, monroeville



Jeff Harris spends a minute with VRS Rehabilitation Counselor Jean Stewart and coworker Jenny Fowler.

“ When something like this happens, you need someone to tell you what’s possible. ADRS did that for me.”

Jeff Harris finds that he can relate to his customers much more than most pharmacists can. After all, he knows what it’s like to be in pain, to be dependent on others, to have impaired mobility.

His perspective is a result of a February 2002 surgery that left him with a spinal cord injury. Suddenly, he said, his life was different. “When you go through a spinal cord injury, you’re in a totally different world,” he said. “You’re scared, and you don’t know what you’re going to do. I didn’t know if I would work again.”

Things were especially difficult because he was the sole breadwinner for his family of five. Then he met Jean Stewart, a counselor with the Vocational Rehabilitation Service office in Jackson. After talking with her, he realized what was possible.

“When I met Jeff, he didn’t think he would leave the house to work,” Jean said. “He didn’t see himself driving again. He really didn’t know what to do. We just sat down and discussed possibilities.”

After considering several options, Jeff decided he wanted to return to his job as a pharmacist in Monroeville. His counselor contacted Robert Perry, a rehabilitation technology specialist in the Mobile VRS office, who made recommendations on accommodations, including a chair to support his arms and a headset and voice recorder for taking prescriptions over the phone. Soon he was back on the job.

The next major hurdle was transportation. When he returned to work, Jeff was dependent on his wife, who also had to transport their three children to and from school and extracurricular activities. It became increasingly clear that Jeff needed to learn to drive again.

Jean arranged a driver’s evaluation, followed by driver’s training. VRS also assisted with modifications to a truck that allow Jeff to steer with his feet. At first he was reluctant to tackle “foot steering,” but after being told that was the only way that he would be able to drive, “It took me about two seconds to say, ‘OK.’ ”

The truck has returned his independence, something he never expected. “I had no idea I would ever drive again. You have to have someone to tell you these things, someone who can tell you, ‘You might need a little help, but you can do this.’ When you’re in the situation I was in, you need someone to tell you that. VRS did that for me.”

jeff harris’ continuum of services

Early Intervention Children’s Rehabilitation Vocational Rehabilitation

Early Intervention services are available to eligible children from birth to age 3. Jeff contacted the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services after his spinal cord injury.

CRS serves children with disabilities from birth to age 21. Jeff became an ADRS consumer as an adult.

VRS assistance enabled Jeff to receive rehabilitation counseling, workplace accommodations, driver’s training and vehicle modifications, all of which enabled him to return to work as a pharmacist.

jerimie goike, birmingham



Jerimie Goike talks with VRS Employer Development Coordinator Stella Pelham.

"I owe my rehabilitation counselor everything. She was always supportive of me. She never doubted any of my abilities."

When “DJ Frog” cranks up his wall of equipment, the dance floor comes alive with people moving to the throbbing sounds of rock and roll. For the lanky young man at the controls of the music machine, the scene brings back a favorite childhood memory. Jerimie Goike made his debut as a disc jockey at age 5, playing records on his Fisher-Price record player while his cousins skated around his grandmother’s carport. No one imagined back then that as a young adult Jerimie would be earning extra money as a popular disc jockey. After all, Jerimie had been diagnosed with autism and did not communicate well until he was 4 years old.

Today, 29-year-old Jerimie talks about his life with autism, speaking to audiences around the state and nation. He says the battle to overcome his “great challenge” began when his parents enrolled him as a young child in a North Carolina autism treatment program. “I wasn’t communicating very effectively at the time so they gave my parents suggestions on what they could do at home to help. This early intervention was very important.”

Equally important, the young man says, was his grandmother’s persistence. Before the youngster was enrolled in the North Carolina program, she worked with him every night as he was put to bed, urging him to “Say ‘mama,’ say ‘mama.’” One night, he did.

Jerimie later attended public school in Anniston where, during high school, Vocational Rehabilitation staff began helping him and his family chart a course for the future. Because of a vision impairment, Jerimie was eligible for vending machine training with the ADRS Business Enterprise Program, but learned quickly that he wanted to be more involved with people. After stints as a clerical worker and bank teller, a position for a switchboard operator became available at the ADRS office in Homewood. It was a perfect fit.

“I love this job,” said Jerimie. “Working here has helped me grow as a person and it lets me help others.” Jerimie helps others by telling his story. It has taken him across the country, where people hear about his personal triumphs and about the ADRS *continuum of services*.

“The continuum is important to children with autism because they can receive all of their services from one agency,” said Jerimie. He also reminds his audiences of the importance of family support, especially when he talks to parents. He urges them not to deny that their child has a disability and not to despair.

“Don’t give up hope. Be resourceful and follow your instincts,” said Jerimie. “That’s what my mom did.”

jerimie goike’s continuum of services

Early Intervention	Children’s Rehabilitation	Vocational Rehabilitation
Jerimie was eligible for Early Intervention services as soon as he was diagnosed with autism. In FY 2003, more than 4,000 Alabama infants and toddlers with disabilities and delays received EI services.	CRS offers assistance to children, teenagers and young adults who have special health care needs, including those with visual impairments.	As Jerimie considered potential careers, VRS provided rehabilitation counseling, career guidance, job placement assistance, and assistance with workplace accommodations.

alabama's early intervention system

Alabama's Early Intervention System (AEIS) coordinates a statewide system of services and supports for infants and toddlers with a substantial delay in a major area of development or a condition that has a high probability of resulting in delay. With the assistance of eight other state agencies working through the Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC), community service providers and the families of children served by AEIS, the system provides a coordinated, family-centered system of services. The early intervention system was created as an important first step to ensuring that all children start school ready to learn.



Matt Stevenson shares a laugh with District Early Intervention Coordinator Tania Baldwin.

AEIS staff members begin early to encourage families who have young children with developmental delays to become involved in community activities that already exist for young children, if possible. Providing early intervention for infants and toddlers in their "natural" environments is a very important part of their learning process.

In home and community settings, such as child-care centers, mother's-day-out programs or city parks, youngsters with disabilities are able to become involved in activities with their nondisabled peers. AEIS works together with families, community organizations, and public and private service providers to help with development.

To be eligible for Early Intervention services, a child must be younger than 3 years old and exhibit a 25 percent or greater delay in one or more of the five developmental areas (cognitive, physical, adaptive, social/emotional, speech/language) or have a diagnosed condition that has a high probability of resulting in developmental

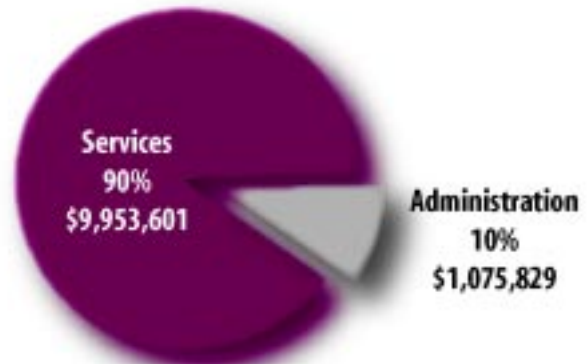
delay. Infants and toddlers may be referred to AEIS by calling the toll-free Early Intervention Child Find hotline, 1-800-543-3098.

early intervention by the numbers

Source of Revenue: \$11,029,430



Use of Revenue: \$11,029,430



early intervention highlights

Early Intervention services

- Provided services to 4,162 infants and toddlers and their families – 147 more than in FY 2002
- Provided financial support and technical assistance to more than 60 local community Early Intervention programs and service coordination agencies statewide

Early Intervention and accountability/quality assurance

- Successfully completed a federal monitoring process, including site visits from the project officer and staff, Office of Special Education, U.S. Department of Education
- Revised personnel standards for staff who serve children with disabilities and their families; the standards were approved by the Interagency Coordination Council
- Developed “state of the art” computer planning and data tool for AEIS, and completed training of all AEIS service coordinators and district staff on the use of the GIFTS computer program

Early Intervention and collaboration

- Collaborated with the Alabama Latin American Association (ALAS) to provide AEIS materials and presentations to service providers for the Hispanic population
- Collaborated with the state Department of Education to survey families who have transitioned from AEIS to 3-5 programs
- Collaborated with Alabama’s Partnership for Children and five other state agencies to complete the Alabama’s System Map for Early Care and Education
- Collaborated with the state’s Title V program to improve services for Children with Special Health Care Needs
- Conducted nine statewide transition workshops in collaboration with the state Department of Education
- Served on the Department of Children’s Affairs Office of School Readiness Advisory Board

Early Intervention and outreach

- Initiated and advertised a toll-free AEIS telephone line to assist with referrals for the state’s Hispanic population and provided Early Intervention materials and forms in Spanish throughout the state
- Distributed more than 115,000 AEIS outreach materials requested by families, organizations, and agencies
- Conducted family satisfaction surveys, securing greater than an 80 percent response rate from eligible families in early intervention programs completing the AEIS monitoring process
- Increased availability of AEIS publications and reports and provided statewide information about AEIS workshops, conferences and resources access via the ADRS website (www.rehab.state.al.us)

early intervention: growing with the future

	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004*</u>
Referrals	2,812	3,184	3,325	3,450	3,350
Eligible	1,804	1,947	2,055	2,036	2,130
Served	3,538	3,843	4,015	4,162	4,195

* Projected

early intervention programs

As part of Alabama's Early Intervention System, the following is a list of program locations for fiscal year 2003. These programs provided supports and services to eligible families in the counties surrounding the city listed.

ANNISTON

ARC of Calhoun and Cleburne County
Children's Rehabilitation Service, District III
East Central Alabama UCP Center, Inc.

ANDALUSIA

Children's Rehabilitation Service, District V
South Central Alabama Mental Health/Mental Retardation Board, Inc.

ATHENS

ARC of Limestone

AUBURN/OPELIKA

Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind, Region VI
Children's Rehabilitation Service, District IV
Project AIM

BIRMINGHAM

Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind, Region III
Alabama Speech and Language Services
ARC of Jefferson County, Inc.
Children's Health System Early Intervention Program
Children's Rehabilitation Service, District II
UAB Sparks Early Intervention
UCP of Greater Birmingham

CULLMAN

Cullman County Center for Developmentally Disabled, Inc.

DECATUR

Early Childhood Services of Centers for the Developmentally Disabled
North Central Alabama Mental Retardation Authority

DOTHAN

Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind, Region VIII
Children's Rehabilitation Service, District V
Dothan-Houston County Mental Retardation Board, Inc.
(Vaughn Blumberg Center)

DUTTON

Twin Acres Early Intervention

EUFAULA

Families and Babies, Playing and Learning

GADSDEN

Children's Rehabilitation Service, District III
UCP of Greater Birmingham

GUNTERSVILLE

Marshall/Jackson Mental Retardation Authority

HUNTSVILLE

Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind, Region II
ARC of Madison County
Children's Rehabilitation Service, District I
Madison County Mental Retardation Board
UCP of Huntsville and Tennessee Valley

JACKSON

Children's Rehabilitation Service, District VI

JASPER

ARC of Walker County
Tri-County MRDD

LOXLEY

UCP of Mobile (Sunrise Program)

McINTOSH

UCP of Mobile (New Journey)

MOBILE

Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind, Region IX
Children's Rehabilitation Service, District VI
Goodwill Easter Seal-Gulf Coast
Gulf Coast Therapy Early Intervention
UCP of Mobile (Project Special Delivery)

MONROEVILLE

Southwest Alabama Mental Health/Mental Retardation Board, Inc.

MONTGOMERY

Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind, Region VII
Children's Center of Montgomery, Inc.
Children's Rehabilitation Service, District IV
The H.O.P.E. Project
Montgomery Area Services for Persons with Mental Retardation
Wiggles and Giggles

MUSCLE SHOALS

Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind, Region I
Children's Rehabilitation Service, District I
Shoals Committee on Programs and Employment for
Mental Retardation 310 Authority (SCOPE)

ONEONTA

UCP of Greater Birmingham (Blount County)

OZARK

Vivian B. Adams Early Intervention
Wiregrass Mental Health Board/SpectraCare

PELHAM

Shelby County ARC/Kids First

PELL CITY

UCP of Greater Birmingham (St. Clair County)

PRATTVILLE

ARC of Autauga/Western Elmore County

ROBERTSDALE

Baldwin County Mental Retardation Board, Inc.

SCOTTSBORO

Marshall/Jackson Mental Retardation Board

SELMA

Cahaba Center Early Intervention
Cahaba Mental Health Center
Children's Rehabilitation Service, District VII

SHEFFIELD

UCP of Northwest Alabama

TALLADEGA

Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind, Region IV
Burton Developmental Center
Children's Rehabilitation Service, District III

TROY

UCP of Mobile (Bright Beginnings)

TUSCALOOSA

Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind, Region V
Children's Rehabilitation Service, District VII
Community Service Programs of West Alabama, Inc.
RISE Program

TUSCUMBIA

Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind, Region I

VALLEY

Valley Haven School

WYNFIELD

Tri-County MRDD

early intervention offices

STATE OFFICE

2129 E. South Blvd., Montgomery, 36116
334-281-8780, 1-800-543-3098, TTY: 1-800-499-1816
334-613-3541 (fax)
Child Find Hotline: 1-800-543-3098
www.rehab.state.al.us

BIRMINGHAM

P.O. Drawer 2328
236 Goodwin Crest Drive, 35201
205-290-4550, 1-888-430-7423
205-943-9302 (fax)
Counties: Cullman, Jefferson, Shelby, Walker

DOTHAN

795 Ross Clark Circle
P.O. Drawer 1627, NE, 36303
334-792-0022, 1-800-677-9123
334-702-8442 (fax)
Counties: Barbour, Butler, Coffee, Conecuh, Covington, Crenshaw, Dale, Geneva, Henry, Houston

HUNTSVILLE

407 Governors Drive, SW, Suite B, 35801
256-5536-6621, 1-800-283-9352, 256-518-9702 (fax)
Counties: Colbert, Franklin, Jackson, Lauderdale, Lawrence, Limestone, Madison, Marion, Marshall, Morgan, Winston

MOBILE

1610 Center St., Suite A, 36604
251-432-4560, 1-800-879-8163
251-432-8632 (fax)
Counties: Baldwin, Choctaw, Clarke, Escambia, Mobile, Monroe, Washington

MONTGOMERY

2127 E. South Blvd., 36116
334-288-0220, 1-800-441-7607
334-613-3541 (fax)
Counties: Autauga, Bullock, Chambers, Chilton, Coosa, Elmore, Lee, Lowndes, Macon, Montgomery, Pike, Randolph, Russell, Tallapoosa

TALLADEGA

7 Bemiston Ave., 35160
256-362-5832, 1-800-947-7140
256-362-6941 (fax)
Counties: Blount, Calhoun, Cherokee, Clay, Cleburne, DeKalb, Etowah, St. Clair, Talladega

TUSCALOOSA

1110 Sixth Ave., East, 35401
205-759-1279, 1-800-723-0490
205-344-4072 (fax)
Counties: Bibb, Dallas, Fayette, Greene, Hale, Lamar, Marengo, Perry, Pickens, Sumter, Tuscaloosa, Wilcox

children's rehabilitation service

Children's Rehabilitation Service provides medical and care coordination to children with special health care needs in homes, schools and other community settings. In addition, CRS provides for local school systems the assessments, evaluations, therapy services and assistive communication devices which enable children with special health care needs to participate fully in school. Through its seven programs, CRS services can be accessed at different times during a child's life.



Stacy Brock was one of the thousands of Alabamians younger than 21 to receive CRS services in FY 2003.

- Information and referral: links families to community resources and services
- Clinical evaluation: identifies the unique needs of a child with feeding problems, communication challenges or special diagnostic needs
- Clinical medical: operates specialty clinics throughout the state
- Patient/family education: provides information necessary to carry out treatment regimens and to make informed choices about services
- Care coordination: assists the child and family in identifying, accessing and utilizing community resources to effectively meet their individual needs
- Parent Connection: provides a network of family support
- Youth Connection: facilitates youth involvement with policy development and decision-making

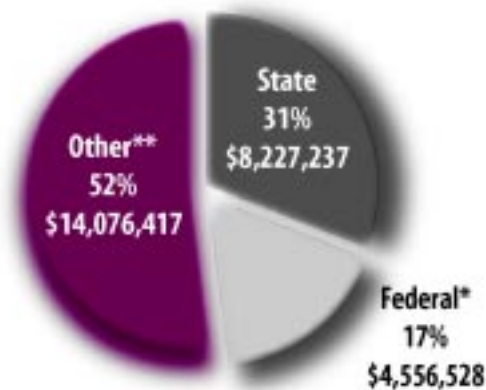
Services are available to any Alabama resident with special health care needs who is younger than 21, while consumers with hemophilia are eligible for services into adulthood. Families can receive services regardless of their income. Financial participation is on a sliding scale, based on each family's needs.

Treatment options vary, ranging from clinical interventions and medication to specialized equipment and therapy services.

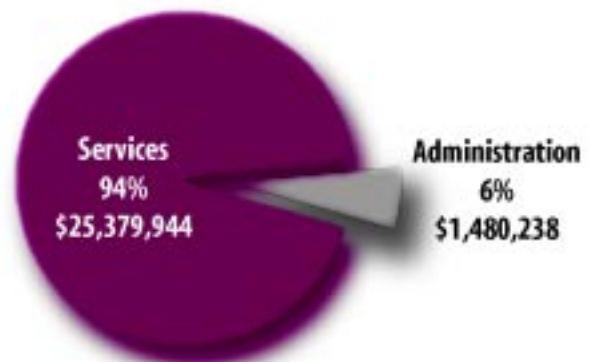
Fifteen community-based offices provide a team approach, bringing together health care specialists from many fields to provide services tailored for each individual family.

children's rehabilitation by the numbers

Source of Revenue: \$26,860,182



Use of Revenue: \$26,860,182



*Federal grants; **Medicaid, insurance reimbursements

children's rehabilitation highlights

Children's Rehabilitation services

- Provided services to more than 22,248 children with special health care needs and their families, including 14,474 children through the CRS clinical programs
- Provided services to 2,451 children with special health care needs who had no other resource for specialty care
- Provided expanded services to more than 358 children with traumatic brain injury*, a 15 percent increase over 2002
- Provided services to 324 patients with hemophilia, a 7 percent increase over FY 2002
- Expanded transition services for adolescents with disabilities through a multidisciplinary Teen Transition Clinic and a referral program with Vocational Rehabilitation Service
- Implemented a new family financial participation schedule

Children's Rehabilitation and education

- Assisted teachers in educating children with special health care needs by providing nursing, social work, audiology, nutrition and physical therapy services to local school systems
- Educated teachers, career tech and vocational/tech school professionals on methods of helping students with disabilities in the classroom
- Provided disability expertise to school nurses statewide regarding children with special health care needs
- Provided expertise and assistive technology, including digital programmable hearing aids, to students and teachers in Alabama school systems to assist children with disabilities in the classroom
- Provided free equipment repair and refurbishing prior to start of the school year for children with special health care needs in Huntsville, Muscle Shoals, Gadsden, Dothan, Selma and other areas

Children's Rehabilitation and collaboration

- Expanded benefits to children with special needs through ALL Kids Plus coverage (CHIP) in collaboration with the Alabama Department of Public Health
- Pulled together groups of key stakeholders to begin development of Alabama's 2010 Action Plan for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs to address national outcome measures related to accessing an organized system of care, family professional partnerships, medical homes, early screening, adequate insurance coverage and transition services
- Participated in Medicaid's Oral Health Coalition to improve access and reimbursements for children's dental needs

Children's Rehabilitation and outreach

- Unveiled a new, improved website with expanded resources for families
- Presented CRS programs through 273 public awareness contacts to 45,862 citizens
- Sponsored a weekend retreat for the Youth Advisory Committee

*Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) is the leading cause of disability and death in children and adolescents in the United States. Of all pediatric injury cases, about one-third are related to brain injury.

children's rehabilitation: growing with the future

Average Number of Children Served Per Quarter: 13,153

Number of New Children Served: 2,040

Number of Encounters with Physicians, Dentists, Staff: 69,601

Number of Uninsured Children Served: 2,451

Average Number of SSI Beneficiaries Younger than 16 Years Served: 3,907

Information and Referral Calls Fielded: 7,774

Average Number of Infants and Toddlers Served: 1,884

Number of Service Encounters in Hemophilia Program: 2,225

Number of Clients in Hemophilia Program: 324

Number of Clinic Visits: 13,528

hemophilia program

The Alabama Hemophilia Program (AHP), established in 1975, is administered by the Children's Rehabilitation Service division of the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services. The purpose of AHP is to provide access to comprehensive, multidisciplinary care to ensure optimal outcomes for Alabamians with hemophilia and related bleeding disorders. The major types of this hereditary disease, which affects predominantly males, are hemophilia A (factor VIII deficiency) and hemophilia B (factor IX deficiency), diagnosed as being mild, moderate or severe. In addition to serving people who have hemophilia, AHP provides services to people with other bleeding disorders. The most common of these is Von Willebrand disease, a condition that affects women as often as it affects men.

The AHP service area covers the entire state. Three-fourths of the population attend clinic at the Birmingham Hemophilia Treatment Center, while the remaining one-fourth attend clinic at the Mobile Hemophilia Treatment Center. The multidisciplinary team available through all components of the program includes board-certified hematologists, orthopedists, nurses, social workers, physical therapists, nutritionists, dentists, local parent consultants, and vocational rehabilitation counselors. In addition to the Hemophilia Treatment Center, community-based services offered include care coordination, family support, client/family education, information and referral, home visiting, nursing care, nutritional assessment and counseling, and physical therapy evaluation and therapy as ordered.

In addition to funding received through the Alabama Legislature, AHP also receives a comprehensive care grant from the Maternal and Child Health Bureau totalling \$28,700.

hemophilia program highlights

- Served 280 people
- Served 25 uninsured participants
- Offered two Montgomery satellite pediatric clinics
- Identified an additional hematologist to coordinate care for adolescents and adults in Mobile Hemophilia Treatment Center
- Offered 43 outreach programs to educate school personnel, health care professionals, patients and families
- Provided participants with more than 4 million units of clotting factor for treatment, at a cost of more than \$2.5 million

children's rehabilitation services

- Service coordination
- Physical therapy
- Speech/language therapy
- Occupational therapy
- Hospitalization/surgery
- Social work services
- Patient education/parent resource centers
- Nursing services
- Nutrition counseling
- Assistive technology
- Low-vision services
- Medical services
- Audiological services
- Special dental and orthodontic services
- Laboratory testing
- Medication



children's rehabilitation offices

STATE OFFICE

2129 E. South Blvd., Montgomery, 36116
334-281-8780, 1-800-846-3697, TTY: 1-800-499-1816
334-613-3553 (fax)
www.rehab.state.al.us

ANDALUSIA

580 West Bypass, 36420
334-222-5558, 1-800-723-8064
334-427-1216 (fax)
Counties: Butler, Conecuh, Covington, Crenshaw

ANNISTON

1010 Christine Ave., Suite 250, 36207
256-235-3050, 1-800-289-9533
256-238-9875 (fax)
Counties: Calhoun, Cherokee,
Clay, Cleburne

BIRMINGHAM

P.O. Drawer 2328
236 Goodwin Crest Drive, 35201
205-290-4550, 1-888-430-7423
205-290-4560 (fax)
Medical Center: 205-939-5900
Counties: Cullman, Jefferson, Shelby, Walker

DOTHAN

795 Ross Clark Circle, NE
P.O. Drawer 1627, 36303
334-792-0022, 1-800-677-9123
334-702-8442 (fax)
Counties: Barbour, Coffee, Dale, Geneva,
Henry, Houston

GADSDEN

1100 George Wallace Drive, 35903
256-547-8653, 1-800-289-1353
256-547-3513 (fax)
Counties: Blount, DeKalb, Etowah

HUNTSVILLE

407 Governors Drive, SW
Suite B, 35801
256-518-8640, 1-800-283-9352
256-518-9702 (fax)
Counties: Jackson, Limestone,
Madison, Marshall, Morgan

JACKSON

1506 College Ave., 36545
251-246-4025, 1-800-283-8140
251-247-1890 (fax)
Counties: Choctaw, Clarke, Monroe,
Washington

MOBILE

1610 Center St., Suite A, 36604
251-432-4560, 1-800-879-8163
251-432-9013 (fax)
Counties: Baldwin, Escambia, Mobile

MONTGOMERY

2127 E. South Blvd., 36116
334-288-0220, 1-800-568-9034
334-284-6557 (fax)
Counties: Autauga, Bullock, Chilton,
Coosa, Elmore, Lowndes, Montgomery,
Pike

MUSCLE SHOALS

1450 E. Avalon Ave., 35661
256-381-1212, 1-800-285-9924
256-386-7338 (fax)
Counties: Colbert, Franklin, Lauderdale,
Lawrence, Marion, Winston

OPELIKA

516 W. Thomason Circle, 36801
334-745-7579, 1-800-568-8428
334-749-3530 (fax)
Counties: Chambers, Lee, Macon, Randolph,
Russell, Tallapoosa

SELMA

2906 Citizens Parkway
P.O. Box 750, 36701
334-872-8422, 1-800-967-6876
334-877-3796 (fax)
Counties: Dallas, Marengo, Perry, Wilcox

TALLADEGA

7 Bemiston Ave., 35160
256-362-9254, 1-800-947-7140
256-480-1472 (fax)
Counties: St. Clair, Talladega

TUSCALOOSA

1110 Sixth Ave., East
P.O. Drawer 2817, 35401
205-759-1279, 1-800-723-0490
205-344-4072 (fax)
Counties: Bibb, Fayette, Greene, Hale,
Lamar, Pickens, Sumter, Tuscaloosa

vocational rehabilitation service

Vocational Rehabilitation Service (VRS) provides specialized employment- and education-related services and training to assist teens and adults with disabilities in becoming employed. The largest division within the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services, VRS markets its trained, job-ready clients and a wide range of consultant services to Alabama's business community. The division offers specialized employment-related assistance to more than 44,300 adults and adolescents with disabilities each year. In addition, VRS works with middle schools, high schools, junior colleges and universities statewide to assist students with disabilities in receiving appropriate educational opportunities.

The types of services available through VRS are as varied as the people it serves and are designed specifically to meet the needs of each individual. Available through any of the 21 VRS offices statewide, services can include educational services; vocational assessment, evaluation and counseling; medical treatment; job training; assistive technology; orientation and mobility training; and job placement. To be eligible for VRS services, individuals must have a physical or mental impairment that is a substantial impediment to employment and must be able to benefit from services in terms of going to work.

Employment is the goal for every VRS participant, regardless of age or disability. In fiscal year 2003, a record-setting 7,705 people with disabilities achieved their dream of employment, thanks to VRS services. VRS helps each person match his or her talents with the right career. Then, VRS links the person to its extensive network of employers through its Employer Account System.

VRS is a vast, coordinated network that creates a remarkable return on taxpayers' investment. For each dollar expended on a VRS consumer who becomes employed, \$18.79 is returned to the economy through employment.* And for Alabamians with disabilities, VRS represents much more than a monetary return. Employment means pride, dignity and independence – being empowered to achieve one's maximum potential.

*Source: U.S. Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration



Becky Guinn was able to return to her classroom partly because of the efforts of Vocational Rehabilitation Service.

vocational rehabilitation specialty programs

Transition Service: Helps high school students with disabilities to prepare for post-secondary education, employment and community living through employment training and support services.

Supported Employment: Assists Alabamians with the most significant disabilities, offering intensive on-site job training and support services including job coaches.

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Care Coordination: Assists persons with TBI and their families in preparing for the return to the community and assists with appropriate vocational rehabilitation services in preparation for entering or returning to school or the workplace.

Blind and Deaf Services: Rehabilitation teaching provides instruction in the use of adaptive techniques and equipment for people who are visually impaired; orientation and mobility specialists provide instruction in the use of compensatory skills and adaptive devices to enable people with visual impairments to travel independently; interpreters are available to assist those with hearing impairments in their job searches.

Business Enterprise Program (BEP): Provides qualified blind individuals with job training and employment opportunities through the management and operation of snack bars, vending facilities, gift shops and cafeterias.

OASIS (Older Alabamians System of Information and Services): Assists Alabamians 55 and older with vision problems in living more independently in their homes and communities.

vocational rehabilitation highlights

Vocation Rehabilitation services

- Provided services to 44,328 Alabamians, including rehabilitation, education- and employment-related services
- Assisted a record 7,705 Alabamians with disabilities in becoming successfully employed at an average wage of \$7.65 an hour
- Return on investment: for each \$1 expended on successfully rehabilitating a consumer, \$18.79 is returned to the economy through his or her employment
- Continued the Welfare-to-Work grant, which helps welfare recipients with disabilities enter the world of competitive employment
- Implemented a sliding fee scale for services contingent upon economic need, resulting in a more consistent service-delivery process for services

Vocational Rehabilitation and education

- Served more than 15,293 Alabama students with disabilities in transitioning from school to work
- Continued to serve 75 school systems through joint funding of 80 full-time job coaches
- Educated teachers, career technology and vocational/technology school professionals on means and methods of helping students with disabilities prepare for the labor market
- Provided rehabilitation technology assistance to VRS consumers, educational personnel, and employers in order to move VRS consumers into competitive employment

Vocational Rehabilitation and collaboration

- Continued the Alabama Head and Spinal Cord Registry for Survivors of Spinal Cord and Traumatic Brain Injury in Alabama in conjunction with the Alabama Department of Public Health, the Head Injury Foundation, and the UAB Center for Injury Sciences
- Continued expansion into one-stop career centers through increased staff and resources to provide disability services and expertise to consumers with disabilities, employers and other one-stop career center partners

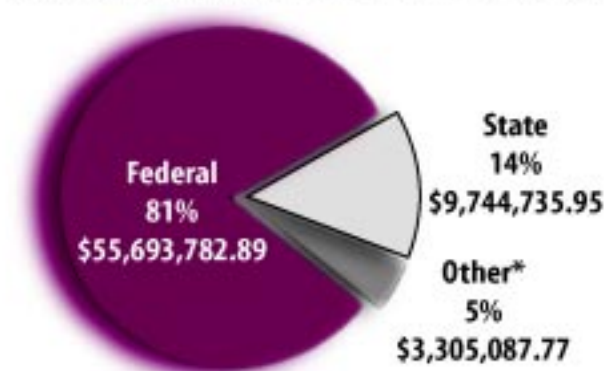
Vocational Rehabilitation and business

- Provided 7,205 disability management and employee placement services to Alabama businesses
- Upgraded the statewide VRS Internet Job Bank system to allow employers to view potential VRS job applicants for employment

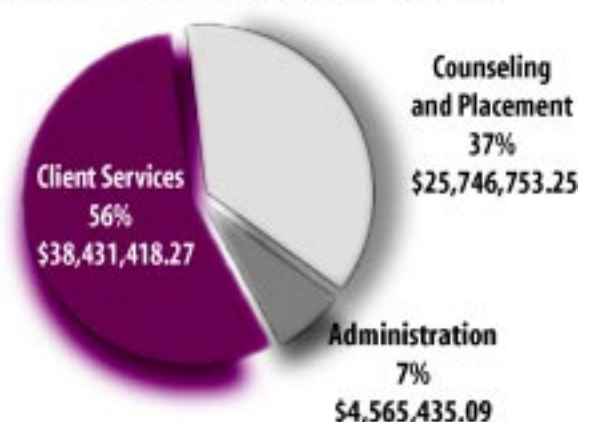
**Source: U.S. Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration*

vocational rehabilitation by the numbers

Source of Revenue: \$68,743,606.61



Use of Revenue: \$68,743,606.61



*Social Security reimbursements

program highlights

Blind and Deaf Services

The Blind/Deaf section provides assistance to Alabamians through its Blind Services, Deaf Services and OASIS (Older Alabamians System of Information and Services) programs. In fiscal year 2003, counselors guided 1,126 individuals with significant visual and hearing impairments into employment. This section also:

- Provided instruction and services in functional independent living skills to 1,624 citizens of Alabama who are blind or visually impaired to allow them to pursue employment or function independently
- Provided instruction and services to 1,202 senior citizens who have age-related blindness to assist them in maintaining or gaining independent living skills to allow them to remain in their own homes
- Taught 289 adults and older adults how to maneuver independently using a white cane
- Supported 16 consumer support groups, thus assisting consumers in adjusting to their vision loss through interaction with other older adults who also are experiencing vision loss
- Partnered with University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) and the Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind to provide a summer personal planning workshop for parents and students who are deaf-blind with significant multiple disabilities
- Provided funding for the Alabama Eye Injury Registry

- Collaborated with Workforce Investment staff to ensure accessibility of persons with disabilities to One-Stop Career Center services throughout the state
- Hired a state specialist for deaf-blind services in partnership with the UAB Deaf-Blind Project
- Developed and helped to present six Law Enforcement and Disability (LEAD) programs to local and state law enforcement agencies, including Department of Public Safety personnel
- Sponsored and expanded the Alabama Radio Reading Service for the visually impaired
- Partnered with the Department of Veterans Affairs to provide services to Alabama's veterans who are visually impaired
- Implemented a strategic plan for services to children and adults who are deaf, hard of hearing or become deaf late in life
- Provided interpreter services to individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing
- Expanded the ADRS/Lakeshore Rehabilitation Facility program to identify individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing and have a learning disability or cognitive disorder
- Received Workforce Investment in School Work Grant to develop leadership and employment skills for deaf and hearing impaired youth to transition to independence and employment

Business Enterprise Program

The Business Enterprise Program (BEP) provides qualified blind individuals with job training and employment opportunities through the management and operation of small businesses that provide independence through self-employment.

The program provides employment for 133 blind vendors and licensees in vending machine facilities and routes, snack bars, cafeterias, washeterias, a gift shop and four military dining hall operations. Alabama's BEP operates 102 vending machine facilities, more than any program in the U.S.

While data for FY 2003 is being gathered, during FY 2002 Alabama's blind vendors employed 326 Alabamians, including visually impaired individuals, in various capacities in their businesses. In FY 2002, gross sales were \$17,706,369, representing an 8 percent increase over FY 2001.

Projections from FY 2003 data indicate that the average annual earnings for Alabama's BEP vendors will increase for

the seventh consecutive year. Since FY 1996, individual annual earnings have increased from \$22,175 to \$31,222 in FY 2002, a rise of nearly 40 percent. It is anticipated that BEP vendor's average earnings in FY 2003 will be the highest in program history.

Also in FY 2003, this program:

- Secured its first-ever dining hall and janitorial contract with the United States Coast Guard Aviation Training Center in Mobile. A veteran vendor, Barbara Manuel, was selected to be the manager of this United States Department of Homeland Security location.
- Added a food service specialist to its staff to aid in the effectiveness and efficiency of its various snack bar and cafeteria operations. This assistance will focus on inventory control, food production, loss prevention, marketing, quality control, product procurement, and data analysis.

program highlights

Community Rehabilitation Programs

The Community Rehabilitation Program (CRP) network of mostly private, nonprofit organizations has been assisting ADRS rehabilitation counselors for more than 40 years in providing important services to consumers. Some of these services include vocational evaluation, case management, work adjustment, skills training, employment skills, job placement and retention.

The Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services/Lakeshore Rehabilitation Facility in Birmingham, the community rehabilitation program operated by ADRS, assists people with severe or significant disabilities in pursuing their dreams – whether they lead them to college and the workplace or directly into employment. Programs are individualized to meet the needs of the consumer. Consumers can participate in vocational assessment, which can assist in identifying vocational skills, abilities and career goals. Additional individualized and group training is available in employability development and college preparation. Job placement is coordinated by an employment specialist, who focuses on matching a consumer to a job using information gathered about the consumer.

In FY 2003, ADRS/Lakeshore:

- Served 1,091 consumers and provided more than 1,200 programs
- Entered its third year of providing specialized evaluation services to consumers who are deaf

- Provided college prep services to the deaf population
- Achieved its three-year CARF accreditation
- Became home to the new ADRS deaf/blind program
- Completed a renovation which expands service space for

VRS consumers

In Montgomery, the Janice Capilouto Center for the Deaf–Easter Seals (JCCDES) is a flagship community rehabilitation program providing quality services to individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing. For the past 24 years, the center has provided various services, including interpreter services, a work conditioning program, job development, job coaching, job retention, and case management. During FY 2003, the center provided these services to 503 individuals in 41 Alabama counties. JCCDES also provided service to the general community through interpreter services and met more than 2,800 requests. In addition, the agency provided sign language classes, education and disability awareness activities with 1,254 participants.

Chosen as the 2003 Organization of the Year by the Alabama Association of Rehabilitation Facilities, JCCDES has been a valuable partner of the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services. They have also partnered with other entities such as the Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind, Jacksonville State University, Alabama Department of Economic Affairs, U.S. Department of Labor, the Junior League and the city of Montgomery to provide needed services in the community.

ADRS network of community rehabilitation programs

ANNISTON

Opportunity Center-Easter Seals

BIRMINGHAM

Easter Seals of the Birmingham Area

Glenwood Mental Health Services

Goodwill Industries of Alabama

Alabama Department of Rehabilitation
Services/Lakeshore Rehabilitation Center
Workshops, Inc.

DECATUR

Tennessee Valley Rehabilitation Center

DOTHAN

Wiregrass Rehabilitation Center

GADSDEN

Darden Rehabilitation Foundation

HUNTSVILLE

Huntsville Rehabilitation Foundation

MOBILE

Goodwill/Easter Seals of the Gulf Coast

Mobile Association for the Blind

MONTGOMERY

Easter Seals Central Alabama

Goodwill Industries of Central Alabama

Janice Capilouto Center for the Deaf-Easter Seals

MARC

MUSCLE SHOALS

Easter Seals Rehabilitation Center, Northwest

Alabama

OPELIKA

Achievement Center-Easter Seals

PRATTVILLE

Smith Center

SELMA

West Central Alabama Easter Seals
Rehabilitation Center

TALLADEGA

E.H. Gentry Technical Facility

THOMASVILLE

Thomasville Mental Health Rehabilitation
Center

TUSCALOOSA

Easter Seals West Alabama

program highlights

Alabama Governor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities

The Alabama Governor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities (Governor's Committee) works in conjunction with Vocational Rehabilitation Service staff to enhance the public's awareness of the abilities of the people with disabilities. Special programs and events demonstrate this strong partnership by providing information about advantages of hiring people with disabilities.

- As part of National Disabilities Employment Awareness Month in October, the Governor's Committee and local affiliated committees sponsored 20 celebrations. At these events, 44 individuals with disabilities were recognized for outstanding performance on the job, and 60 businesses were honored for consistently including people with disabilities as a part of their diverse workforce.

- Fiscal year 2003 was the third year of a three-year grant from the Alabama Council for Development Disabilities to establish the Business Leadership Network (BLN). This program is an employer-led endeavor that promotes best disability employment practices and enhances employment opportunities for skilled candidates who have disabilities.

- The Governor's Committee joined ADRS and Troy State University in conducting the 5th Alabama Governor's Youth



The National Disabilities Employment Awareness Month awards luncheon in Opelika was one of 20 similar events around the state.

Leadership Forum (YLF) for Students with Disabilities. Thirty-seven student delegates were selected to participate in the five-day forum on the Troy State campus in June. Student delegates had an opportunity to meet many successful Alabamians with disabilities who are recognized as leaders and role models. In addition, delegates developed their own personal leadership and career plans.

Through the partnership between the Governor's Committee and Troy State University, the forum has reached 111 youth with disabilities, with 22 percent of these alumni returning as staff members.

Traumatic Brain Injury Care Coordination

Cutting across all physical, socioeconomic, and cultural lines, traumatic brain injury (TBI) has lifelong, far-reaching effects for individuals, their families and their environment.

The Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services (ADRS) has been working in this arena for the past 20 years and collaborates with numerous partners, including the Alabama Head Injury Foundation (AHIF), the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH), and the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) to achieve this goal. The quality of life for many Alabamians affected by TBI and/or spinal cord injury has been improved through services funded by the Impaired Drivers Trust Fund (IDTF) and ADRS.

ADRS is proud to have been designated the lead agency in Alabama for TBI. To many, TBI is a relatively new disability field, but ADRS and its partners have been at the forefront for service and information delivery in this area.

As the lead agency in TBI, ADRS serves as a source of information, education and resources for survivors, professionals, agencies and organizations. Through this special initiative, more than 2,100 individuals with TBI were assisted in FY 2003 with community re-integration; service linkage; housing; respite care; independent living services; resource coordination; attendant care; medical supplies; assistive equipment; cognitive, recreational, and vocational rehabilitation; and for many, ultimately, employment.

program highlights

Rehabilitation Technology

Rehabilitation technology plays a vital role in assisting Alabamians with disabilities in living and working independently. Currently, ADRS employs five rehabilitation technology specialists throughout the state to solve rehabilitation problems through the systematic application of technologies, engineering methodologies and scientific principles to meet the needs of

people with disabilities in the areas of employment, transportation, education, independent living, rehabilitation and recreation.



Rehabilitation Technology Specialist Jeff Mega explains a device to Becky Guinn.

In FY 2003, equipment was purchased which allows each rehabilitation technology specialist (RTS) to perform simple basic hardware and accessory assembly, repair, and installation resulting in

more comprehensive services to Alabamians with disabilities.

Equipment for architectural surveys and home modification assessments was purchased for each rehabilitation technology specialist. This equipment now allows the technology specialist to accurately measure and document architectural assessment results.

More than a dozen assistive technology training programs were conducted during the year to groups such as ADRS staff, supported employment staff, and educators. These training programs increase awareness of assistive technology and rehabilitation technology services in the state of Alabama.

Monthly augmentative communication technology (ACT)

rehabilitation technology services

- Job accommodations
- Basic accommodation installation and repair
- Task analysis
- Home modification consultation
- Transportation/mobility consultation
- Architectural accessibility walkthrough survey
- Architectural accessibility basic facility survey
- Product searches/information and referral
- Physical capacity evaluations
- Augmentative communication assessments
- Ergonomic equipment demonstrations

clinics were conducted throughout the year at Children's Rehabilitation Service clinic sites throughout the state. The rehab technology specialist is a vital member of each of these clinic teams. Many children and adults with disabilities received technology accommodations and services to enhance their communication or enable them to communicate.

During the year, consumers from the VRS, Homebound, Independent Living, Rehab Teacher, TBI, Medicaid Waiver, and CRS programs received various services from rehab technology specialists. Additionally, technology-related assessments and recommendations were also provided for non-consumers – such as departmental staff and others – as needed.

In FY 2003, rehabilitation technology specialists also:

- Provided assistive device service to 284 ADRS consumers
- Provided engineering design services to 67 ADRS consumers
- Evaluated 258 distinct ADRS consumers for assistive technology
- Provided one or more services to 332 ADRS consumers

North Alabama, allowing a greater number of consumers to benefit from the program's services. The Huntsville branch expanded its storage capacity to accommodate the donations of equipment received.

• Continued to focus on the lack of adequate funding for assistive technology through the Ability Loan Program. Increased participation by SouthTrust Bank created additional intake advocates and steady growth in the amount loaned since its inception.

Statewide Technology Access and Response

The Statewide Technology Access and Response System for Alabamians with Disabilities (STAR) is Alabama's technology-related assistance project.

In FY 2003, this program:

- Directly provided advocacy and/or technical information assistance to approximately 3,100 consumers and approximately 500 professionals through TechNet, a grassroots group comprised entirely of consumers.
- Continued its expansion of the Recycling Program to

program highlights

Transition Service

ADRS transition from school to work services help to ensure that Alabama's students with disabilities leave school as independent, productive and contributing members of their communities. During FY 2003, ADRS continued to expand and improve collaborative interagency transition programs. Transition students continued to make up more than one-third of all individuals served and placed into employment by ADRS counselors.

The transition program also continued to strengthen the jointly funded job coach program with more than 75 local school systems across the state. This \$2.5 million program is designed to place students with disabilities who are in their final year of school into competitive jobs in their local communities before they leave high school. The program is cooperatively managed by local Vocational Rehabilitation Service offices and school system staff and during FY 2003 provided services to more than 2,000 students through 80 full-time job coaches. In addition, students, parents, rehabilitation counselors, local school special and regular education staff, and the job coaches work together to plan for students' successful and smooth transition to adult life and work.

In FY 2003, ADRS also continued efforts to develop and improve transition partnerships, programs and service models to meet the needs of students with more significant disabilities and barriers to employment and community living. Other highlights of FY 2003 include:

- Collaboration with the Montgomery County Board of Education, Department of Education Division of Special Education and the Autism Society to develop a model program
- Continuation of specialized services for students with specific learning disabilities and/or attention deficit disorders
- Expansion of the College Prep Program to include two



The Governor's Youth Leadership Forum was held in June at Troy State University.

additional projects. This program was recognized by the Children and Adults with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (CHADD) organization as an "Innovative Project."

- Collaboration with the Alabama Department of Education, Division of Special Education and the Department of Corrections to implement the Prison Transition Initiative
- Continuation and expansion of projects funded by Workforce Investment Act Youth Programs
- The Youth Leadership Forum (YLF), a weeklong opportunity for high school students to interact with other students with disabilities. YLF teaches students about self-advocacy, transition issues, and other issues related to disability.
- Collaboration with Children's Rehabilitation Service to provide Teen Transition Clinic
- Winning special first-place recognition at the 2003 Learning Disability Association National Training Conference in Chicago for a "proud project" display
- ADRS Transition Specialist Linda Hames being elected to the Board of Directors of the Learning Disabilities Association of America

Supported Employment

In an effort to assist individuals with the most-severe disabilities in becoming employed, supported employment provides community-based assessments, job-site training and support services to ensure quality job performance and stability. These services are funded through Milestones, an outcome-based payment system. Supported employment specialists go to the job site and teach the required job tasks and also arrange continued support services for the worker throughout his or

her working life to ensure long-term job stability.

The Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services funded 29 agencies across the state to provide supported employment services to individuals with the most-severe disabilities in FY 2003.

More than 1,700 individuals participated in supported employment, and 260 became successfully employed. These individuals averaged working more than 21 hours per week and earned an average wage of \$5.80 per hour.

program highlights

Services for Employers

The Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services has a 20-year history of partnering with Alabama employers to create opportunities for both employers and the consumers served by its Vocational Rehabilitation Service (VRS) division. As part of that commitment, the department has staffed a team of 17 employer development coordinators to develop and maintain winning partnerships with employers, providing a wide array of services to meet their needs.

Expertise and collaboration

These services have been custom-designed with input from business and industry and cover the gamut of disability-related expertise:

- recruitment of pre-screened and qualified job candidates
- assistance with retention of valued workers whose jobs are affected by disability
- in-service training or consultation on "hot" employment topics such as lowering the cost of disability management; architectural accessibility; job site accommodation dialogue, ideas and resources; interviewing do's & don'ts; and a host of other issues
- rehabilitation engineering assistance

VRS has committed both staff and dollars to developing expertise and services for unique populations of job candidates through its many employment programs and affiliations that include:

- VRS Employer Development Coordinator Team
- VRS School-to-Work Transition Program
- VRS Supported Employment Program (Milestones)
- Community Rehabilitation Programs
- VRS Governor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities
- VRS-supported Business Leadership Network

VRS staff who provide leadership to these initiatives and resources have now focused their energy on strategic planning for collaboration among the resources and with employers throughout Alabama.

employer services by the numbers

Unduplicated tally of employer accounts or contacts: **1,392**

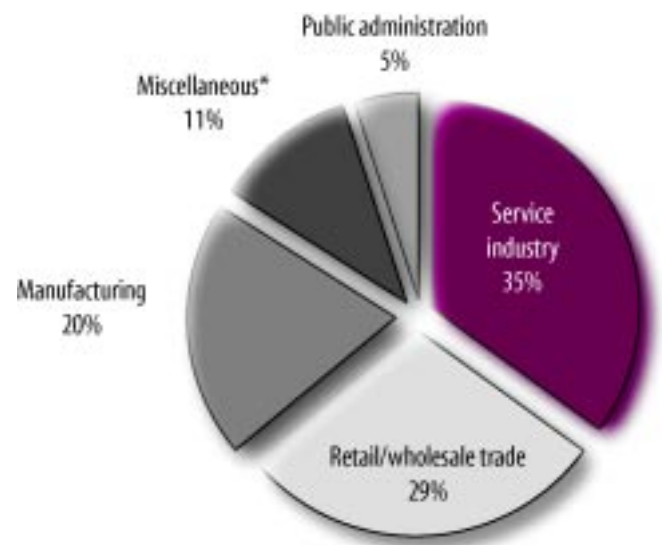
Total services to these employers: **7,205**

Total number of consumers served (or being served): **1,844**

Total number of services to consumers: **11,258**

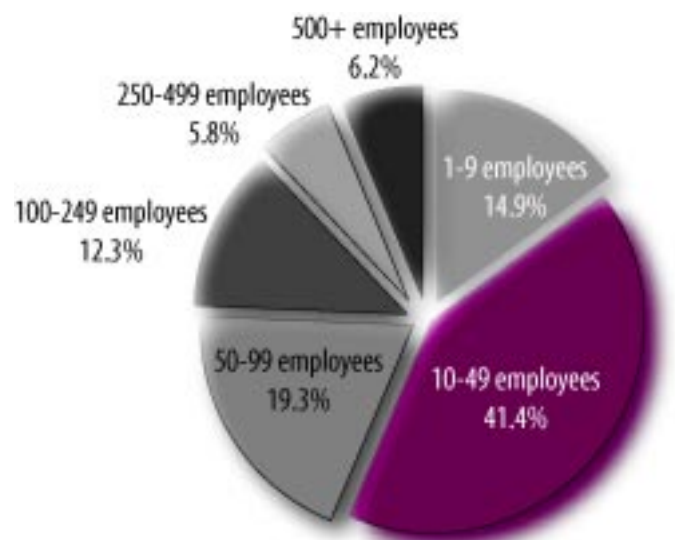
Total number of consumers hired: **948**

where the jobs are for VRS consumers



*agriculture, fishing, forestry, construction, transportation, communication, finance, insurance, real estate

who's hiring VRS consumers (by company size)



Business Leadership Network

One of the newer affiliations for VRS is the expanding Business Leadership Network (BLN). BLN is an employer to employer network with a commitment to disability issues, identifying areas of need to support Alabama employers by providing resources, information links and qualified job candidates. This is, in part, accomplished through their new ABLE (Alabama Business Leadership Employment) Network website (www.alabamaBLN.org) that includes:

- internet-based job-posting system and an applicant pool linked directly to prescreened, job-ready candidates from VRS
- access to disability resources
- best hiring practices
- cutting-edge training

Regional Outreach

Capitalizing on the successful partnerships that sister vocational rehabilitation programs have developed in surrounding states, VRS also leads a regional initiative to leverage employer contacts from state to state. This regional Employment Partners Team has strategically positioned the public VR program in the Southeast to be the employers' resource of choice for workforce needs. Their goal is to expand state VR agency penetration of the existing employer marketplace and further develop untapped markets through a regional approach. This team is now serving as a model for the rest of the country in the development of a national network as well.

VRS employer partner profiles

UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA AT BIRMINGHAM

ADRS partner for 33 years

"VRS is a proactive resource for finding workable, reasonable job accommodations to meet our staffing needs today and in the future."

Susan McWilliams, vice president for human resources

Type of company: university, hospital

Employs VRS consumers with: traumatic brain injury, learning disabilities, attention-deficit disorder/attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder, physical and mental disabilities

Types of jobs: clinical research, hospital services, clerical and administrative, computer services, facilities and maintenance

VR services used: Recruiting services, technical assistance, training (disability awareness and etiquette in the workplace, disability management), RAVE (Retaining A Valued Employee) Program

ADAM'S MARK HOTEL (Mobile)

ADRS partner for 10 years

Type of company: national hotel chain

Employs VRS consumers with: deafness, cerebral palsy, visual impairment

Types of jobs: front desk, banquet servers, wait staff, dishwashers, valet parking, cleaning

VR services used: sign language training, job coaching, interpreter services

SOUTHEAST ALABAMA MEDICAL CENTER (Dothan)

ADRS partner for 17 years

Type of company: health care

Employs VRS consumers with: deafness, visual impairment, mobility impairment

Types of jobs: professional, management, clerical

VR services used: recruiting, supported employment, job coaching, assistance with accommodation identification

CITY OF AUBURN

ADRS partner for 25 years

Type of company: Municipality providing services to the citizens of Auburn

Employs VRS consumers with: blindness and deafness

Types of jobs: law enforcement communications and training, street signage, lawn maintenance

VR services used: job coaching, interpreters, sign language classes, rehabilitation teaching, orientation and mobility training, rehabilitation technology assistance

PIZZA HUT (Florence, Muscle Shoals, Russellville)

ADRS partner for 5 years

"Vocational Rehabilitation Services has been great to work with, providing us with qualified employees. We enjoy our ongoing productive relationship."

Tina Barron, restaurant manager

Type of company: food service

Employs VRS consumers with: mental illness, mental retardation, learning disabilities, visual impairment

Types of jobs: dough maker, dishwasher, cook

VR services used: rehabilitation technology services, disability awareness training, job accommodations assistance, job shadowing/pre-employment screening

WERNER (Anniston)

ADRS partner for 4 years

"It is a pleasure to work with the staff at VR. We appreciate the support they give to their clients as well as to us as the employer. Thanks for the wonderful referrals."

Lucretia Lambert, human resource manager

Type of company: ladder manufacturer

Employs VRS consumers with: deafness

Types of jobs: team assembly

VR services used: Job placement, sign language classes, interpreters

FASTRACK INC. (Montgomery)

ADRS partner for 4 years

Type of company: auto detailing and cleaning

Employs VRS consumers with: all types of disabilities

Types of jobs: cashiers, detailers, general labor

VR services used: job coaching and recruiting

vocational rehabilitation offices

STATE OFFICE

2129 E. South Blvd., Montgomery 36116
334-281-8780, 1-800-441-7607, TTY: 1-800-499-1816
334-281-1973 (fax)
www.rehab.state.al.us

ANDALUSIA

580 West Bypass, 36420
334-222-4114, 1-800-671-6833
334-427-1216 (fax)
Counties: Butler, Coffee, Conecuh, Covington, Crenshaw, Pike

ANNISTON

1105 Woodstock Ave., 36207
256-238-9300, 1-800-671-6834
256-231-4852 (fax)
Counties: Calhoun, Cleburne, Randolph

BESSEMER

Bessemer State Technical College
P.O. Box 308, Highway 11 S, 35021
205-426-1294
County: Jefferson

BIRMINGHAM

Lakeshore Rehabilitation Facility
P.O. Box 59127, 3830 Ridgeway Drive, 35259
205-870-5999, 1-800-441-7609
205-879-2685 (fax)
Statewide

HOMEWOOD (Birmingham)

P.O. Box 19888, 236 Goodwin Crest Drive, 35219
205-290-4400, 1-800-671-6837
205-290-0486 (fax)
Counties: Blount, Chilton, Jefferson, Shelby

COLUMBIANA

Community Services Building
P.O. Box 856, 35051
205-669-3829, 205-669-0605 (fax)
County: Shelby

DECATUR

621 Cherry St., NE
P.O. Box 1686, 35601
256-353-2754, 1-800-671-6838
256-351-2476 (fax)
Counties: Cullman, Lawrence, Limestone, Morgan

DOTHAN

795 Ross Clark Circle, NE, 36303
334-792-0022, 1-800-275-0132
334-792-1783 (fax)
Counties: Barbour, Dale, Geneva, Henry, Houston

GADSDEN

1100 George Wallace Drive, 35903
256-547-6974, 1-800-671-6839
256-543-1784 (fax)
Counties: Cherokee, DeKalb, Etowah, Marshall, St. Clair

HUNTSVILLE

2939 Johnson Road, SW, 35805
256-650-8219, 1-800-671-6840
256-650-8250 (fax)
Counties: Jackson, Madison

JACKSON

1401 Forest Ave., P.O. Box 1005, 36545
251-246-5708, 1-800-671-6836
251-246-5224 (fax)
Counties: Choctaw, Clarke, Monroe, Washington

JASPER

301 N. Walston Bridge Road
Suite 116, 35504
205-221-7840, 1-800-671-6841
205-221-1062 (fax)
Counties: Marion, Walker, Winston

MOBILE

2419 Gordon Smith Drive, 36617
251-479-8611, 1-800-671-6842
251-478-2197 (fax)
Counties: Baldwin, Choctaw, Clarke, Escambia, Mobile, Monroe, Washington

MONTGOMERY

2127 E. South Blvd., 36116
334-288-0220, 1-800-441-7578
334-281-1388 (fax)
Counties: Autauga, Bullock, Elmore, Macon, Montgomery

MUSCLE SHOALS

1450 E. Avalon Ave., 35661
256-381-1110, 1-800-275-0166
256-389-3149 (fax)
Counties: Colbert, Franklin, Lauderdale

OPELIKA

520 W. Thomason Circle, 36801
334-749-1259, 1-800-671-6835
334-749-8753 (fax)
Counties: Chambers, Lee, Macon, Russell, Tallapoosa

SCOTTSBORO

P. O. Box 296, 203 S. Market St., 35768
256-574-5813, 1-888-418-8823
256-574-6033 (fax)
County: Jackson

SELMA

2906 Citizens Parkway, 36701
334-872-8422, 1-888-761-5995
334-877-3796 (fax)
Counties: Dallas, Lowndes, Wilcox

TALLADEGA

#4 Medical Office Park, 35160
256-362-1300, 1-800-441-7592
256-362-6387 (fax)
Counties: Clay, Coosa, Randolph, St. Clair, Talladega

THOMASVILLE

Thomasville Rehabilitation Center
P.O. Box 1006, Adams Building,
Bashi Road, 36784
334-636-5421, 1-800-335-3237
334-636-4618 (fax)
Counties: Choctaw, Clarke, Monroe, Washington

TROY

518 S. Brundidge St., 36081
334-566-2491, 1-800-441-7608
334-566-9415 (fax)
Counties: Barbour, Bullock, Butler, Crenshaw, Pike

TUSCALOOSA

1305 37th St., E, P.O. Drawer 1610, 35405
205-554-1300, 1-800-331-5562
205-554-1369 (fax)
Counties: Bibb, Fayette, Greene, Hale, Lamar, Marengo, Marion, Perry, Pickens, Sumter, Tuscaloosa, Walker, Winston

state of alabama independent living

The State of Alabama Independent Living (SAIL) Service provides specialized in-home education and counseling, attendant care, training and medical services to Alabamians with severe disabilities. The SAIL program has seven community-based offices located throughout the state to serve residents in all 67 counties.

SAIL ensures the consumer can live as independently as possible at home and in the community through three specialized programs.

Homebound Services

This program provides a wide range of education and home-based services to assist people with severe disabilities in leading more independent lives. To be eligible for this program, a person must:

- be an Alabama resident
- be at least 16 years old
- have a medical diagnosis of traumatic brain injury or quadriplegia
- be dependent on others for assistance with activities of daily living
- demonstrate financial need

Independent Living Support Services

The goal of this program is to enhance and promote independence in the home, community and workplace. To be eligible a person must:

- have a severe disability that limits his or her ability to live independently
- provide evidence that by receiving this service, his or her potential to achieve independence will improve

Waiver Services

This special Medicaid Waiver allows SAIL to maximize its resources and access additional programs and services for the individuals served. To be eligible for services through the waiver, a person must:

- be at least 18 years old
- be medically and financially eligible for a nursing home
- have experienced the onset of the disability prior to age 60
- have a disability as a result of reasons other than aging



Billy Hutto was one of more than 1,600 people to receive SAIL services in FY 2003.

independent living services

- Attendant care
- Personal assistance services for working participants
- Patient and family education
- Counseling and guidance
- Nursing management
- Home modifications
- Disability-related prescriptions
- Disability-related medical supplies
- Peer counseling
- Training in activities for daily living
- Information and referral



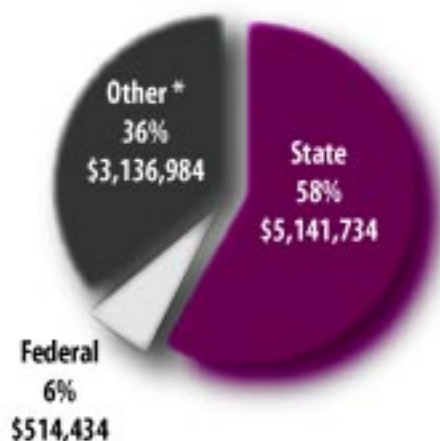
independent living highlights

- Assisted more than 1,660 Alabamians with the severest disabilities in remaining in their homes and communities rather than in nursing homes or other institutions
 - 624 consumers with severe disabilities in the Homebound Program
 - 486 consumers with severe disabilities in the Independent Living Service
 - 544 consumers with severe disabilities in the Medicaid Waiver Program
- Provided services to consumers and families in all 67 counties through seven SAIL teams located statewide

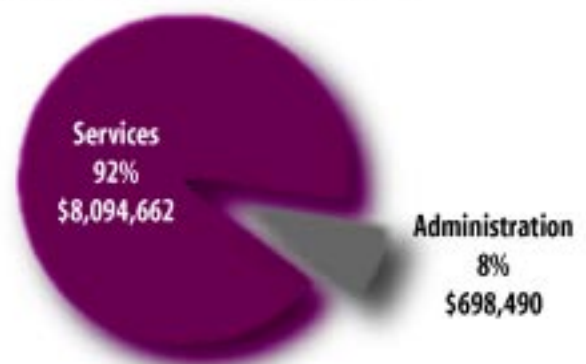
SAIL teams of registered nurses, rehabilitation counselors and independent living specialists provide individualized services and training to SAIL consumers and their families about the unique problems and needs presented by each differing disability. SAIL teams also teach activities of daily living, health, safety and nutrition as well as the use of assistive technology. In addition, SAIL teams educate SAIL consumers and their families about self-advocacy, empowering them to access services.
- In partnership with the Alabama Medicaid Agency, began implementing a proposal under the Ticket to Work and Work Incentive Improvement Act (TWWIIA) to use Infrastructure Grant Funds to pay for a pilot program for Personal Assistance Service (PAS), as an additional waiver service. This program allows SAIL to provide services for working individuals who need personal assistance services outside the home in an employment setting.
- Was awarded the Maximize Opportunities to Customized Competitive Employment (MOCCE) grant through the U.S. Department of Labor, WorkForce Coordinating Grant, allowing for the identification of employment barriers for persons with severe disabilities in Alabama. Grant funds will aid in the development of a strategic plan to help alleviate these barriers.
- In conjunction with the MOCCE project, began developing the Alabama Customized Employment (ACE) pilot program through another Department of Labor grant. This WorkForce Action Grant allows for the placement of two customized employment specialists in the one-stop career centers in Montgomery and Anniston. The ACE project will develop innovative strategies in employment placements for persons with the most severe disabilities.
- Received positive reviews following Alabama Medicaid Agency audits of area offices
- Used the ADRS Recycling Centers, donated goods and services, in-kind services, and community resources to serve consumers throughout the state
- Continued to develop resources to supplement limited funding with donated goods and services. In the past year, independent living specialists secured donations of \$399,717.31.

independent living by the numbers

Source of Revenue: \$8,793,152



Use of Revenue: \$8,793,152



*Medicaid reimbursements

independent living offices

STATE OFFICE

2129 E. South Blvd., Montgomery, 36116
334-281-8780, 1-800-441-7607, TTY: 1-800-499-1816
334-613-3542 (fax)
www.rehab.state.al.us

ANNISTON

1105 Woodstock Ave., 36207
256-238-9300, 1-800-671-6834, 256-231-4852 (fax)
Counties: Calhoun, Cherokee, Clay, Cleburne, Coosa,
DeKalb, Etowah, Marshall, Randolph, St. Clair,
Talladega

DECATUR

621 Cherry St., NE, 35601
256-353-2754, 1-800-671-6838
256-351-2476 (fax)
Counties: Colbert, Cullman, Franklin, Jackson,
Lauderdale, Lawrence, Limestone, Madison, Morgan

DOTHAN

795 Ross Clark Circle, NE, 36303
334-792-0022, 1-800-275-0132
334-792-1783 (fax)
Counties: Barbour, Butler, Coffee, Conecuh,
Covington, Crenshaw, Dale, Geneva, Henry, Houston,
Pike

HOMEWOOD (Birmingham)

P.O. Box 19888
236 Goodwin Crest Drive, 35219
205-290-4400, 1-800-671-6837
205-945-8517 (fax)
Counties: Blount, Chilton, Jefferson, Shelby

MOBILE

2419 Gordon Smith Drive, 36617
251-4779-8611, 1-888-388-3245
251-478-2198 (fax)
Counties: Baldwin, Choctaw, Clarke, Escambia,
Mobile, Monroe, Washington

MONTGOMERY

2127 E. South Blvd., 36116
334-288-0220, 1-800-441-7578
334-613-3455 (fax)
Counties: Autauga, Bullock, Chambers, Dallas, Elmore, Lee,
Lowndes, Macon, Montgomery, Russell, Tallapoosa, Wilcox

TUSCALOOSA

1305 37th St., East, 35405
205-554-1300
1-800-441-7597, 1-800-331-5562
205-554-1369 (fax)
Counties: Bibb, Fayette, Greene, Hale, Lamar, Marengo,
Marion, Perry, Pickens, Sumter, Tuscaloosa, Walker, Winston

People Served

Counties	Vocational Rehabilitation Service		Children's Rehabilitation Service	SAIL Service	Early Intervention System	Fiscal 2003
	Served	Rehabilitated	Served	Served	Served	Total Served
AUTAUGA	398	82	226	15	59	698
BALDWIN	895	183	329	41	96	1,361
BARBOUR	213	32	79	24	24	340
BIBB	190	40	48	19	30	287
BLOUNT	306	75	106	16	30	458
BULLOCK	83	7	65	1	14	163
BUTLER	213	33	106	16	16	351
CALHOUN	1,488	247	467	45	69	2,069
CHAMBERS	411	66	125	8	31	575
CHEROKEE	329	36	119	16	14	478
CHILTON	271	48	143	22	30	466
CHOCTAW	153	29	57	5	21	236
CLARKE	331	68	165	16	21	533
CLAY	222	29	51	11	7	291
CLEBURNE	176	42	88	5	15	284
COFFEE	411	73	123	23	35	592
COLBERT	548	84	122	8	32	710
CONECUH	192	36	50	7	9	258
COOSA	126	30	31	3	11	171
COVINGTON	445	97	162	30	28	665
CRENSHAW	162	25	51	13	8	234
CULLMAN	627	126	190	14	76	907
DALE	382	56	163	19	35	599
DALLAS	333	80	263	8	70	674
DeKALB	566	99	206	29	48	849
ELMORE	658	104	292	21	55	1,026
ESCAMBIA	346	59	67	19	30	462
ETOWAH	1,318	251	522	52	56	1,948
FAYETTE	231	30	76	10	39	356
FRANKLIN	337	48	86	12	15	450
GENEVA	134	19	72	18	17	241
GREENE	46	10	38	10	19	113
HALE	179	40	53	3	46	281
HENRY	96	11	50	4	17	167

People Served

	Vocational Rehabilitation Service		Children's Rehabilitation Service	SAIL Service	Early Intervention System	Fiscal 2003
Counties	Served	Rehabilitated	Served	Served	Served	Total Served
HOUSTON	863	157	326	42	101	1,332
JACKSON	711	137	121	14	39	885
JEFFERSON	7,599	1,289	1,305	215	572	9,691
LAMAR	167	32	46	10	34	257
LAUDERDALE	754	129	208	25	53	1,040
LAWRENCE	224	63	108	14	33	379
LEE	811	165	320	19	49	1,199
LIMESTONE	377	94	194	25	49	645
LOWNDES	130	19	122	2	19	273
MACON	183	33	100	2	19	304
MADISON	3,001	446	863	45	338	4,247
MARENGO	223	23	101	10	48	382
MARION	421	48	70	20	38	549
MARSHALL	843	138	272	29	49	1,193
MOBILE	3,352	664	1,733	196	348	5,629
MONROE	238	31	131	23	20	412
MONTGOMERY	2,130	385	1,173	63	240	3,606
MORGAN	954	229	310	21	106	1,391
PERRY	103	27	56	13	32	204
PICKENS	219	28	93	18	39	369
PIKE	294	57	159	15	43	511
RANDOLPH	235	44	59	14	15	323
RUSSELL	297	52	120	11	18	446
ST. CLAIR	553	82	134	37	48	772
SHELBY	1,309	160	237	26	156	1,728
SUMTER	141	21	42	10	41	234
TALLADEGA	983	209	258	45	59	1,345
TALLAPOOSA	445	65	116	13	18	592
TUSCALOOSA	2,231	374	507	80	261	3,079
WALKER	1,051	100	136	22	82	1,291
WASHINGTON	196	31	117	8	13	334
WILCOX	148	30	88	2	26	264
WINSTON	326	48	58	10	33	427
TOTALS	44,328	7,705	14,474	1,662	4,162	64,626

Purchased Services

	Vocational Rehabilitation Service	Children's Rehabilitation Service	SAIL Service	Fiscal 2003
Counties	Expenditures	Expenditures	Expenditures	Total Expenditures
AUTAUGA	\$336,200.86	\$58,207.88	\$83,099.28	\$477,508.02
BALDWIN	721,079.14	276,632.10	187,408.29	1,185,119.53
BARBOUR	100,545.19	28,773.16	61,055.00	190,373.35
BIBB	235,262.14	22,418.43	62,010.18	319,690.75
BLOUNT	335,082.28	76,857.49	53,624.92	465,564.69
BULLOCK	33,479.42	103,885.57	299.97	137,664.96
BUTLER	217,254.27	38,202.54	35,166.66	290,623.47
CALHOUN	1,411,959.04	196,053.82	129,617.85	1,737,630.71
CHAMBERS	293,645.36	47,839.13	43,382.86	384,867.35
CHEROKEE	135,879.08	32,770.58	49,689.39	218,339.05
CHITON	206,334.31	37,751.00	40,264.89	284,350.20
CHOCTAW	25,970.85	17,801.92	16,565.49	60,338.26
CLARKE	167,643.00	38,937.15	66,475.84	273,055.99
CLAY	68,920.37	20,753.56	18,583.65	108,257.58
CLEBURNE	190,825.87	40,435.90	9,135.53	240,397.30
COFFEE	216,273.27	50,868.07	72,763.84	339,905.18
COLBERT	255,774.15	94,339.68	39,695.48	389,809.31
CONECUH	164,047.70	23,824.51	26,716.87	214,589.08
COOSA	20,496.00	4,854.36	0.00	25,350.36
COVINGTON	282,753.96	61,281.78	80,960.67	424,996.41
CRENSHAW	134,103.55	15,406.56	32,480.16	181,990.27
CULLMAN	452,245.56	823,385.06	34,222.18	1,309,852.80
DALE	198,063.34	37,552.05	52,136.94	287,752.33
DALLAS	305,132.38	64,584.17	51,031.71	420,748.26
DeKALB	396,807.53	196,610.97	72,101.67	665,520.17
ELMORE	349,929.23	79,404.93	132,838.28	562,172.44
ESCAMBIA	148,835.61	23,908.38	38,127.86	210,871.85
ETOWAH	933,001.65	231,065.48	126,603.89	1,290,671.02
FAYETTE	256,195.50	34,946.94	37,946.51	329,088.95
FRANKLIN	187,002.33	34,191.64	51,731.40	272,925.37
GENEVA	36,775.36	34,643.34	63,990.34	135,409.04
GREENE	28,679.96	12,801.67	16,211.74	57,693.37
HALE	147,593.00	22,757.95	796.86	171,147.81
HENRY	38,711.76	20,636.79	11,589.83	70,938.38

Purchased Services

	Vocational Rehabilitation Service	Children's Rehabilitation Service	SAIL Service	Fiscal 2003
Counties	Expenditures	Expenditures	Expenditures	Total Expenditures
HOUSTON	\$483,695.46	\$176,734.94	\$101,611.01	\$762,041.41
JACKSON	424,444.58	68,490.82	69,043.58	561,978.98
JEFFERSON	5,199,535.77	1,356,417.52	926,855.06	7,482,808.35
LAMAR	147,637.24	35,757.10	58,644.63	242,038.97
LAUDERDALE	441,359.49	193,189.23	97,750.70	732,299.42
LAWRENCE	132,006.05	128,343.67	58,506.32	318,856.04
LEE	826,213.12	350,475.46	148,525.48	1,325,214.06
LIMESTONE	249,571.99	96,788.66	76,361.42	422,722.07
LOWNDES	170,904.15	20,833.26	12,164.69	203,902.10
MACON	155,509.77	78,123.96	15,771.92	249,405.65
MADISON	1,595,781.59	524,849.56	187,404.02	2,308,035.17
MARENGO	169,887.88	21,925.45	27,379.89	219,193.22
MARION	263,479.57	63,680.20	62,139.33	389,299.10
MARSHALL	378,171.21	279,480.46	63,344.43	720,996.10
MOBILE	2,210,597.66	689,815.98	751,573.10	3,651,986.74
MONROE	148,087.48	69,091.22	74,433.37	191,612.07
MONTGOMERY	2,242,816.19	371,529.89	363,578.51	2,977,924.59
MORGAN	567,296.47	145,156.14	181,176.53	893,629.14
PERRY	100,963.56	18,233.42	36,915.46	156,112.44
PICKENS	95,145.89	39,897.65	71,012.82	206,056.36
PIKE	239,596.77	123,431.32	47,013.43	410,041.52
RANDOLPH	141,356.74	21,283.10	43,766.76	206,406.60
RUSSELL	298,186.99	55,388.31	94,770.05	448,345.35
ST. CLAIR	223,647.34	199,668.09	64,531.46	487,846.89
SHELBY	671,295.28	83,581.81	113,358.02	868,235.11
SUMTER	52,539.36	66,032.05	8,260.40	126,831.81
TALLADEGA	438,434.23	100,791.27	130,280.23	669,505.73
TALLAPOOSA	513,903.25	35,723.77	48,715.02	598,342.04
TUSCALOOSA	1,877,879.16	208,316.04	334,634.40	2,420,829.60
WALKER	672,240.39	84,017.50	59,687.92	815,945.81
WASHINGTON	89,248.58	36,887.00	35,503.81	161,639.39
WILCOX	109,707.77	16,116.60	2,745.58	128,569.95
WINSTON	200,511.49	24,345.16	23,304.22	248,160.87
TOTALS	\$30,564,155.49	\$8,688,781.17	\$6,189,089.60	\$45,442,026.26

fiscal year 2003 grants

Because we value maximum acquisition and efficient and effective management of resources, the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services continues to seek funding from state and federal sources to enable Alabama's children and adults with disabilities to achieve their maximum potential. The following are grant highlights from fiscal year 2003.

Workforce Investment

In January 2001 the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services was awarded an \$87,178.44 grant from the Youth Council of the Alabama Workforce Investment Board through the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs. The purpose of the grant is to implement two initiatives: the Governor's Youth Leadership Forum (YLF) and the Transition Weekend Program. The mission of these programs is to develop independence, self-advocacy, leadership, and career/employment skills in all students with disabilities participating in the two programs.

The Youth Leadership Forum is an innovative, intensive five-day residential career leadership-training program for high school students with disabilities. Program activities focus on career planning, leadership development, community resources, technology resources, and information on disability history. YLF encourages each student participant to reach his or her full potential. Each student participant develops a personal career and leadership plan to be implemented when the participant returns to his/her home community.

The Transition Weekend program is a highly structured, though casual, program designed to assist students who are blind or significantly visually impaired, and their families, in planning for the students' future independence and career. Participants receive information about programs, technology and services specifically designed for adults who are blind or visually impaired as well as other appropriate community support services and resources available. Students and their families also receive information about vocational rehabilitation services for individuals who are blind or visually impaired and resources and services available through the Alabama Career Center System. Facilitated assessment and individual planning activities result in each student developing a personal career choice and career and independence action plan to be linked, as appropriate, to each student's school Individualized Education Plan and vocational rehabilitation Individual Plan for Employment in their home communities. Planning for post-secondary education and lifelong learning also result.

The grant also was renewed for the 2004 fiscal year. The award increased to \$157,146. This increase allows the employment of a support services coordinator who will provide support to both programs. The increase will also fund a reunion of past YLF

participants. ADRS and ADECA are proud of this collaborative effort.

Learning to Impact our Future Experiences (LIFE)

The Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services was awarded a \$503,000 grant from the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA) to provide transition services to deaf and hard-of-hearing youths. The purpose of this initiative is to develop and implement a collaborative leadership and career development program for eligible 14- to 21-year-old high school students who are deaf or hard of hearing and living within the Alabama Workforce Investment Area.

This initiative is a collaborative effort involving the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services, E.H. Gentry Technical Facility, Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind, Jacksonville State University, and the Janice Capilouto Center for the Deaf-Easter Seal. The program consists of three components: transition to independence and employment (job readiness training and work experience), transition workshops for students who are deaf or hard of hearing and their parents, and leadership workshops for students who are deaf and hard of hearing. Approximately 389 students in 45 Alabama counties have been referred to this project since the original grant was awarded in January 2002. Students are served through this initiative with a goal of identifying and providing all deaf and hard-of-hearing students in Alabama an opportunity to gain work experience and to access the support needed to ensure academic and employment success. As part of this initiative, ADRS has also established a Transition Committee made up of stakeholders involved in transition services for students who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Grant for Welfare-to-Work Program

The Welfare-to-Work Program (WTW) was extended for a period of July 1, 2003, through June 30, 2004. The \$1.5 million grant provides counseling, job placement, on-the-job training, and facility services to consumers who are severely disabled and who are receiving welfare benefits. During FY '03, WTW counselors provided services to 1,985 consumers. Of that number, 245 consumers were successfully employed after working an initial six months. Many of the WTW counselors originally hired through the grant have become permanent merit employees of the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services and continue to provide quality services to our consumers.

ADRS also received an additional grant from ADECA to work with the one-stop career centers to provide services to consumers who are and are not disabled – mainly training and job placement services for consumers referred by the court system.

Integrated Genetic Services Grant

ADRS completed work in May 2003 on its three-year grant from the Maternal and Child Health Bureau to enhance the integration of

fiscal year 2003 grants

health services for infants and young children with spina bifida, cleft lip and palate, and other serious genetic conditions. The annual grant award of \$175,000 funded a genetics demonstration project for Mobile, Baldwin, and Washington counties to facilitate early identification of these conditions at birth and prior to birth. The purpose of early identification is to ensure timely referral to a coordinated system of health and related services to improve health outcomes for these children. The project was a joint venture between the ADRS Children's Rehabilitation Service division and the University of South Alabama, Department of Medical Genetics, with Wladimir Wertenlecke, M.D., serving as the principal investigator. Providers, consumers, and community agencies were surveyed regarding barriers to care and strategies were implemented to address the identified barriers. A two-day satellite training teleconference entitled "Cultural Competence and Service Delivery: Focusing on Families" was held June 29-30, 2000, to improve the knowledge and understanding of providers regarding cultural influences on the delivery of health services. Coordination of health services through a medical home was a prominent theme in provider training as well as in service delivery to families. A parent journal was developed to help families become better organized and more efficient in their record-keeping skills.

In-Service Training

This \$159,744 grant from the Rehabilitation Service Administration plus \$15,974 in state matching monies enabled the department to provide professional development and training opportunities to staff members. Staff training is linked to specific job tasks that enhance employee job performance in providing services to people with disabilities.

This year was the third in a five-year grant funding cycle. Beginning in October 2000, the grant includes additional funding specifically for the purpose of establishing a video conference system for the department and to enhance our technology capabilities for training. ADRS was the first department in Alabama's state government to have this specific ability to link all of the department's offices statewide. During this first year, 10 conference rooms were equipped with cameras and monitors as well as 14 office cameras. The initial funding year also provided necessary funds for enhancing the department's computer network and infrastructure capabilities, making it possible for the audio/visual technology to work without compromising the flow of data necessary for our case management and financial systems. During 2002, 21 desktop cameras were added to the network's system as well as enhanced cables and software to accommodate additional cameras and users. Technology was also purchased that will allow our system to become integrated with colleges, universities and other agencies nationally and internationally.

During 2003, we purchased equipment that will integrate archived and "real-time" servers. These servers are capable of giving ADRS staff the advantage of "training on demand" when their schedule and work load permits and from the convenience of their desktop computer. They will also allow staff to participate in "real-time" training that takes place in another office in the state without the expense of time and travel.

The funding for the video conference system is for the purpose of providing training to staff, connecting offices around the state for conference and meeting purposes and to allow for the opportunity for distance education, linking college and university programs to staff attending postgraduate programs. This funding level will continue for the entire five years of the grants funding cycle that ends in 2005.

Hemophilia

Children's Rehabilitation Service (CRS) receives a grant from Hemophilia of Georgia. The total amount of the grant monies, funded by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau, is \$28,700.

The Alabama Hemophilia Program (AHP), administered through Children's Rehabilitation Service, uses funding from this grant in providing comprehensive, culturally sensitive, family-centered care and services to Alabama residents with bleeding disorders. Special efforts are made to include traditionally underserved populations, such as persons living in rural areas, minorities, women and adolescents. Additionally, funding is used in efforts to provide outreach and education to people with bleeding disorders, medical providers, school personnel, and other community-based agencies.

Independent Living/Project OASIS

The Older Alabamians System of Information and Services (OASIS) was awarded \$417,404 in Title VII Chapter 2 formula funds for FY 2003. The Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services provided \$46,601 to expand services to older adults with visual problems. These funds enabled the program to serve 1,202 consumers in 2003, providing rehabilitation teaching services, low-vision services, transportation to low-vision clinics, orientation and mobility services, peer support, support groups, and reader services.

Many older consumers have lost vision as a result of age-related changes to the eye. Services provided through the OASIS program enabled older adults who are visually impaired to live independently within their home for as long as possible. The Alliance on Aging Research indicates that vision impairment is one of the top four reasons older Americans lose their independence, costing \$26 billion annually for increased medical and long-term care. The OASIS program proves to be a good investment for the state, allowing older visually impaired individuals to maintain their independence, costing approximately \$500 per person per one-time expenditure.

fiscal year 2003 grants

Statewide Technology Access and Response (STAR)

Statewide Technology Access and Response System for Alabamians with Disabilities (STAR) is Alabama's technology-related assistance project. STAR received a tenth year award of \$344,312 (a 50 percent reduction) from the U.S. Department of Education/National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research.

STAR's grassroots organization, TechNet, is comprised entirely of consumers and directly provided advocacy and/or technical information assistance to approximately 3,100 consumers and approximately 500 professionals. Due to budget cuts, fiscal year 2003 was TechNet's last year. As a result of TechNet's efforts, several local communities have agreed to continue having technology expositions on an annual basis.

The expansion of the STAR Recycling Program to North Alabama has allowed a greater number of consumers to benefit from the program's services. The Huntsville branch, which is administered by United Cerebral Palsy of Huntsville and Tennessee Valley, Inc., has expanded its storage capacity in order to accommodate the donations of equipment received. The Huntsville branch is expected to more than double its number of loans during the next fiscal year.

The Ability Loan Program continues to focus on the lack of adequate funding for assistive technology. Increased participation by SouthTrust Bank has created additional intake advocates and steady growth in the amount loaned since its inception.

The final two years of the STAR grant will be focused on developing and executing a plan of continuation for our core initiatives (recycling centers, financial loan program and information and referral).

Technology Loan Closet (TLC)

Children's Rehabilitation Service enhanced the lives of people with disabilities again in FY '03 through its Technology Loan Closet located in the Anniston office. This service to residents of Calhoun County and outlying areas of Alabama was originally funded three years ago through a \$50,000 grant from the Calhoun County Community Foundation Stringfellow Health Fund. During FY '03, more than 100 loans of augmentative communication equipment were made to individuals of all ages in the area. TLC allows users to have hands-on experience with assistive technology before committing to a purchase. TLC meets a substantial community need as evidenced by regular usage by local education agencies, area hospitals, private therapists and other agencies. Future plans include securing additional grant funds to update existing technology.

Business Leadership Network

Fiscal year 2003 has been a busy third year of a three-year grant from the Alabama Council for Developmental Disabilities to establish the Business Leadership Network (BLN). The BLN held its kick off

event on Oct. 31 at the Alabama Power Corporate office in Birmingham. This event debuted the Able Network website located at alabamaBLN.org. The website features internet-based recruiting and job posting for businesses to assist in their efforts to hire people with disabilities. The Alabama BLN model is based on a business, state and federal partnership which is unique in the United States. The Alabama BLN was invited to present this model at the 6th annual USBLN summit held in San Francisco.

FORMULA GRANTS

The Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services receives several allotments from the federal government to develop and administer federal rehabilitation programs on the state level. The following formula grant awards indicate those program allotments and accomplishments.

Independent Living Service

A grant of \$295,647 from the Rehabilitation Services Administration allowed Independent Living Service to provide independent living skills training, advocacy, peer support and information and referral to 486 clients across the state. These services are provided by independent living specialists. The services provided are monitored quarterly by the State Independent Living Council (SILC) which develops a plan for Independent Living Service every three years.

In addition to providing direct services, the independent living specialists work closely with community organizations to ensure access to and local community support for independent living services for clients in communities across the state.

Supported Employment

Alabama used \$533,255 funding from the State Grant Supported Employment Program, formerly known as Title 6-C money, along with other Title 1 money to fund 29 supported employment agencies across the state. These agencies continued to provide services under Milestones, an outcome-based payment system. More than 1,700 individuals participated in supported employment during this period and 260 became successfully employed. Individuals working as a result of their participation in supported employment averaged more than 21 hours per week and earned an average wage of \$5.80 per hour.

Training opportunities continue to be available to all staff working in supported employment. Two additional sessions of "Best Practices in Supported Employment" training were held. This training continues to be taught by staff from Virginia Commonwealth University. Approximately 70 individuals completed this training in 2003, bringing the total number of trained staff to 350. This training will continue to be available to staff in 2004.

The quality of supported employment services in Alabama continues to improve. Individuals are obtaining jobs of their choice

fiscal year 2003 grants

and maintaining their jobs as a result of extended support. Currently, more than 600 individuals are being followed in long-term support across the state.

State of Alabama Client Assistance Program (SACAP)

This \$169,555 grant from the U.S. Department of Education Rehabilitation Services Administration is the sole funding source for the State of Alabama Client Assistance Program. SACAP is an advocacy service that works cooperatively with Vocational Rehabilitation Service to assist people who have questions about problems with their vocational rehabilitation program. SACAP assisted 28 individuals in fiscal year 2003.

Alabama Work Incentives Network (ALA-WIN)

The ALA-WIN grant is currently in its third year of a five-year period. ADRS received \$300,000 a year to provide services to 51 Alabama counties. ADRS currently has benefits specialists in Mobile, Montgomery, Muscle Shoals, Dothan and Tuscaloosa and a referral coordinator in Montgomery. These specialists work with people in benefit status receiving Social Security Disability and/or Supplemental Security Income. They provide information on how wages will affect benefits. During FY 2003, more than 7,000 contacts were made with people in benefit status through group presentations and one-on-one counseling sessions.

Traumatic Brain Injury

The Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services was awarded another \$100,000 in a Health Resources and Services Administration Post-Demonstration grant in 2003.

Research studies indicate the incidence of psychiatric disorders occurs at a significantly higher rate after a traumatic brain injury (TBI). Additionally, individuals with TBI are especially sensitive to the side effects of drugs that act on the central nervous system. Research further suggests that the presence of psychiatric disorders affect symptoms of TBI and traditional therapeutic intervention may adversely affect compensatory strategies used by the individual with TBI. The goal of the grant was to develop a system that will enable individuals with both psychiatric disorders and TBI to be dually identified and receive proper medication and appropriate behavioral/therapeutic intervention.

Four local regional forums were held for consumers, family members, advocates and service providers in the TBI and mental health fields. During these forums, participants received training on this dual diagnosis disorder and shared concerns in their community for related issues.

A statewide conference was held where national experts educated participants on the topic of dual disorder identification and intervention. Also, national experts were used to develop a model training program on CD about TBI and psychiatric disorders,

appropriate guidelines for psychopharmacology and behavioral/therapeutic interventions.

ADRS collaborated with UAB-TBI Model Systems program, the Alabama Department of Mental Health/Mental Retardation, the Alabama Head Injury Foundation, and the Alabama Disabilities Advocacy Program on this project.

Maximizing Opportunities for Customized Employment (MOCCE)

The Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services' State of Alabama Independent Living (SAIL) Service program was awarded a \$150,000 grant funded through the U.S. Department of Labor. The purpose of the grant, entitled Maximizing Opportunities for Customized Employment (MOCCE), is the identification of barriers to employment throughout the state for people with severe disabilities. After identification of barriers, the grant then calls for the establishment of local, regional and statewide task forces to help develop strategic plans to alleviate these barriers so that persons with severe disabilities may return to community living and enter employment as well.

In the provision of services and in employment practices, the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, creed, national origin, religion, age or disability. This material is available in alternate format upon request.



**Alabama Department of
REHABILITATION SERVICES**